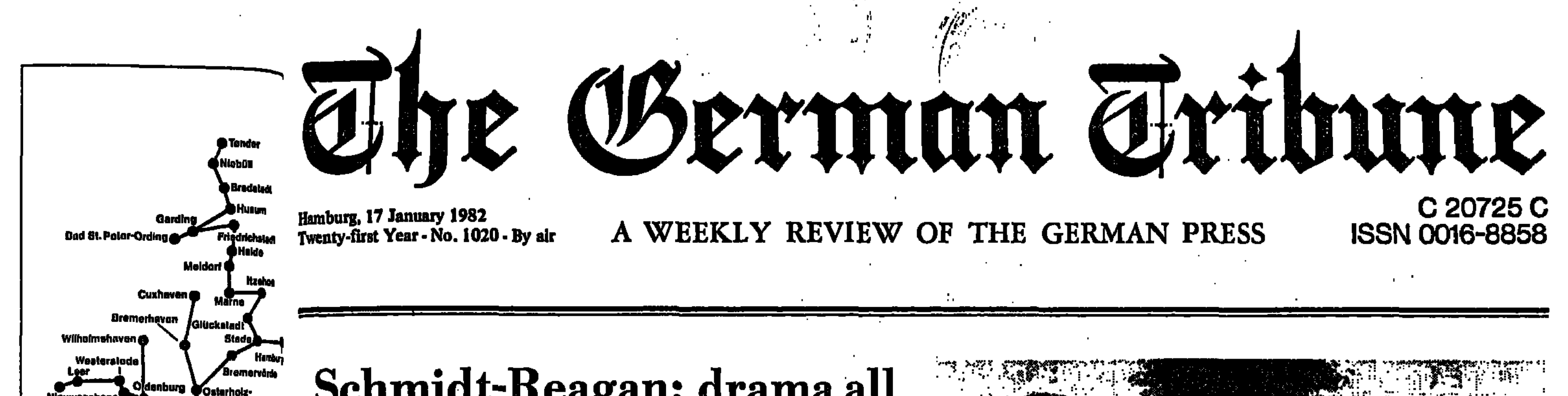


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Schmidt-Reagan: drama all in the build-up

The build-up to talks between the German Chancellor and the US President in Washington was more dramatic than the talks themselves — and not for the first time.

For years this has been a feature of German-American summits. Hectic media men and mediocre politicians seize on the slightest upset in the dialogue between Bonn and Washington to develop pre-talk edge.

Every encounter between Helmut Schmidt and Jimmy Carter was make-or-break. It was much the same this time for Reagan and Schmidt.

Their actual meeting then went very much according to schedule and past experience. Courtesy and alliance considerations prevailed when the two met in the Oval Office.

There was no word-slinging of the kind Franz Josef Strauss chose to belabour the Chancellor with on the day of the summit, but there was plain speaking.

In accordance with Herr Schmidt's express wishes the summit revealed the severe current strain on ties between Bonn and Washington.

It is largely due to differing opinions on the response to the military coup in Poland, but eased by the Chancellor's agreement with the US view of the situation ("a critical juncture in world affairs").

It is also eased by President Reagan's support for the aims of Western policy on Poland as framed by Bonn and the European Community.

After weeks of hectic behaviour, common sense and a level-headed approach stand a chance of returning to German-American ties.

But does that necessarily mean all is brigt and beautiful again between Bonn and Washington?

The Chancellor says the clash of views is just routine, but the heated disputes between allies do not this time seem to accord with this.

And when emotions prevail in politics, common sense often takes a back-seat.

This was demostrated by the Western response to the military take-over in Warsaw. Instead of condemning together the humiliating end to the Polish dream of freedom, the Western countries indulged in mutual recriminations.

The talks in the White House have not marked the end of transatlantic recriminations either, it is to be feared. Nato countries are likely to continue to differ over the most suitable approach to be adopted.

It is as though test questions were being asked for which grades were awarded.

FIRST, who has shown himself to be most outraged by the suspension of legality in Poland?

US Secretary of State Haig has already awarded the grades. France, very good. Britain, good. Germany, satisfactory.

Philologically, of course, one cannot deny that official German pronouncements on Poland have lacked both Gallic *esprit* and Anglo-Saxon precision.

But is the resolution passed unanimously (with a single abstention) by the Bonn Bundestag five days after the military take-over in Poland insufficient proof of a German sense of outrage?

Is it not enough to express "solidarity with the long suffering Polish people," to demand the "*release of all internees*" and to pillory the use of force and the suppression of the free will of the people?

Was Bonn not first to frame the three minimum demands laid down by the West: an end to martial law, release of internees and resumption of talks between the Polish authorities and Solidarity and the Church?

There really must be an end to recriminations. Bonn is not a doubtful ally, even though its leaders may not be keen to trade fine words and empty gestures.

SECOND, what part did the Soviet Union play in the Polish crackdown? Hair-splitting over this issue falls little short of hypocrisy.

It will be none too easy to determine whether Moscow prompted the crackdown or played a mere background role. But that it was partly to blame is easily demonstrated.

What would have happened if the Soviet Union had not controlled the *Eastern bloc? The answer must surely be* that Poland would long since have been a democracy.

Not for a moment has Bonn doubted that Moscow was in this way partly to blame for the Polish crackdown. Why else would Chancellor Schmidt have written not only to General Jaruzelski but also to Mr. Brezhnev?

THIRD, how can we help the Poles? The West is agreed that they must be helped but at loggerheads on how to set about it. It is at odds over the most effective means of ending the Polish drama.

Fireside chat . . . President Reagan and Chancellor Schmidt at the White House.
(Photo: dpa)

Sanctions are an option on which views could hardly differ more. Experience has shown that they seldom have much effect.

They will certainly not force Moscow on to its knees now when Poland is at stake.

To expect any other outcome would be to disregard the rigid power structures that have reigned supreme in Eu*rope since the Second World War.*

Yalta cannot be superseded by the mere imposition of sanctions. A military balance was agreed there 37 years ago that has since been underpinned by the balance of nuclear terror.

For all this Moscow has been guaranteed its European glacis. It is not going to be bludgeoned into allowing greater freedom on the outskirts of its empire by a refusal to allow Aeroflot planes to land in America.

The same goes for the shelving of negotiations on a new wheat agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union and for restrictions in what is already a strictly limited export of US technology to the USSR.

Not even massive sanctions imposed by the entire West *are likely to have the* desired effect. If a relaxation of Soviet pressure on Poland can be achieved at all, then it will only be by other methods.

Which? That was the point on which Helmut Schmidt and Ronald Reagan differed. The United States is keen on confrontation, whereas Germany would prefer to ease the Polish crisis with the aid of contacts and to exert pressure on Poland and the Soviet Union by means of urgent talks rather than spectacular acts.

West Germany is called on to appreciate the American dilemma. After years of humiliation the Americans were in the process of regaining their self-esteem.

The crackdown in Poland has made them again *fell unsure of themselves*. What they see going on in Poland is not just a violation of freedom; it is also a

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(Cartoon: Walter Hanel/Frankfurter Rundschau)

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WORLD AFFAIRS

The many sides to a complicated and ever changing alliance

Is the alienation currently apparent in ties between Bonn and Washington merely the culmination of a process that has been slowly under way for years?

Is it the beginning of a breach that can no longer be healed? Have disagreements between Germany and American assumed a new quality? Is the Atlantic alliance in jeopardy?

These and similar queries, questions one is bound to ask in the New Year, may well overshadow the months ahead just as much as the dramatic deterioration in East-West relations.

The sanctions unilaterally imposed by President Reagan on the Soviet Union are certainly of a kind America's allies will find it hard to condone, especially if the method becomes routine.

This being so, debate in the Federal Republic of Germany is dominated by how to retain US goodwill while at the same time pursuing a policy in keeping with German interests.

Basically, the alternatives are fairly obvious. Either we are capable of impressing on the United States that German foreign policy priorities differ from Washington's or we are not.

We must then sacrifice German interests to a US policy the prerequisites of which we no longer share, but choose to do so in view of a German security shortfall that has always characterised Bonn's foreign policy.

The first option is, if anything, preferred by the Bonn government, the second by the Opposition.

In connection with the first option two reactions abroad are worth noting. Commentators lament either German nationalism or German anxiety.

Both are currently seen as reasons why Bonn no longer takes what is felt to be a realistic view of world affairs.

The *New York Times*, for instance, has written that it would be foolish to claim that the Germans today see the world clearly.

Must this be taken to mean that at present only the United States does? This is precisely what makes the dialogue with Washington so difficult at the moment.

The US government has only a short step to take from pragmatism to dogmatism, and as for the cliche of Bonn's allegedly inordinate anxiety, closer scrutiny shows that it does not arise merely in connection with punishment of Moscow.

There is no reason why it should, but what if Germany itself stands to be punished by punitive action against Russia, as it would if the natural gas-for-pipelines deal between Bonn and Moscow were to be cancelled?

The American are known to be far from keen about the gas deal, so one may well wonder whether pressure to toe this particular line might not result from the new US view of its own alliance.

When recent weeks are taken as a whole, individual events decline in significance and the overall position comes to the fore. One feels bound to ask another question of a more general nature:

Can one still talk in terms of a Western alliance at all? Or would it not be more appropriate to admit here and now that although the North Atlantic states still have interests in common they can no longer reach agreement in their assessment of the enemy and of the means by which to fight him?

It would be important at this point to state clearly where views differ and not continually to try and heal breaches after the event.

Political crises are not just dangerous; they can be beneficial when they prompt a reappraisal. But in the past, as a rule, we have been given to complaining too much about the others.

In the end misunderstandings were said to have been the reason why Nato countries failed to understand each other. But that is simply not the case.

Differences of opinion between Germany and the United States have been in evidence since 1975 and can thus be termed more or less permanent.

At present they have three main causes:

- The United States is trying to reestablish America's world power status and claim to hegemony heedless that it no longer reigns supreme economically.

As a result, the military face of power has become more prominent.

- The moral aspect of politics, coupled with a sense of America's moral superiority, is enhanced and contrasted with the Soviet Union.

Punishment, inflicted on the Soviet Union in the form of economic sanctions, is a case in point.

- A new dynamics has grown apparent in US policy towards the states of Eastern Europe, where America no longer seems prepared.

It looks as if we are about to see a return to the rollback policy of the 50s.

Bonn's policy on the other hand is (and must be):

First, to continue to pursue the static policies of a medium-sized power interested mainly in stable conditions. As a medium—sized power Germany is virtually predestined to mediate.

To attempt to be an intermediary is not, as critics claim, to outreach Germany's possibilities, although it may not necessarily be advisable to harp on the fact.

Second, Bonn does not feel called on to sit in judgment over an imperfect world. Given Germany's past, it would be ill-advised to do so.

This having been said, it has nonetheless lent effective assistance to Poland and voiced moral condemnation of the military regime in Warsaw.

Third,Bonn *works on the assumption* that direct pressure exerted on states in the Soviet sphere of influence reduce their leeway rather than increasing it.

The entire debate whether Moscow is behind General Jaruzelski's coup or Poland preferred to go it alone in imposing martial law is, viewed in this light, mere shadow-boxing and relatively immaterial in the context of the true state *of affairs* in the Eastern bloc.

There can be no denying that in view of such far-reaching differences of opinion not only policy on Poland but also Nato ties as a whole are at stake.

One must, however, bear in mind that current US policy towards Moscow is not a policy on Poland at all but a demonstration of one world power trying to teach another what is right and proper.

We are not a world power but are clearly entitled to interpret any unnecessary heightening of tension as an increase in conflict potential that is a threat to us — even though there may be nothing we can do about it.

Given these differences of opinion, how is one to set about resolving them? *Is Bonn sovereign or, let us say,* semi-sovereign in its relations with Washington? Or can we really, in freely assessing the situation, while maintaining all due loyalty to Washington, pursue a foreign policy of our own based on this assessment without running the risk of mental or material punishment?

Washington has lately been stating its various foreign policy interests and deciding on the practical measures to be taken virtually without consulting its allies.

This would seem to indicate that the US government envisages practising its undisputed leadership of the West in a way that could well transform existing differences into an irreparable breach.

It almost looks as though the United States wants to justify after the event the reasons why General de Gaulle pulled France out of Nato in 1964.

The General did not just want to decide France's foreign policy himself; he also wanted not to be dragged into world power conflicts involving decisions on which he had not been consulted.

What, for instance, could Bonn today *do if, as is all too likely to be the case,* US sanctions prove not enough and Washington, as it has already hinted, were to decide to turn the screw and impose even more punitive measures?

Henry Kissinger in the late 50s showed understanding for the fact that Europeans wanted a say of their own in decisions affecting their destiny.

In Washington today there no longer seems to be room for such subtle considerations.

The origins of German-American alienation must currently be sought mainly in Washington. This is not a claim based on anti-American sentiment; it is a simple statement of fact.

It is because the US administration has decided to allow the world only a choice between two sides again. But the days of bipolarity as it existed in the 50s are over.

Bonn would be sacrificing its own interests entirely if it were to accept without reservation the new simplicity of US foreign policy.

Loyalty is not the same as taking orders without a murmur.

Paul Noack

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 10 January 1982)

Schmidt-Reagan talks

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brutal claim to supremacy staked by the rival superpower that America is powerless to do much about.

President Reagan imposed economic sanctions on the Soviet Union partly to counteract this American sense of being powerless.

Bonn's reluctance to pursue a policy of confrontation is not dictated by a petty, narrow-minded outlook, as US critics generally maintain.

This is not the case even though West Germany does three times as much trade with the Soviet Union as America, and not even though the fate of such a gigantic contract as the natural gas-for-pipelines deal might hang in the balance.

An even more telling point is the special worries that are bound to concern a front-line state in the East-West stakes.

Bonn is worried about Berlin, about ties with fellow-countrymen in the GDR, about opportunities of graduated development in the Eastern bloc and about peace in Europe.

Well-meaning Americans will bear in mind these circumstances in evaluating Bonn's disinclination to pursue a hard-line approach.

Has America really forgotten that Bonn resisted President Carter's pressure to break off diplomatic relations with Iran but that it was Herr Ritzel, the German ambassador, who negotiated with the Khomeini regime the terms that led to the release of the Tehran embassy hostages?

Has America forgotten that the Federal Republic of Germany was one of the few European countries to back the US boycott of the Moscow Olympics?

The further assumption is that America would stand to drive greater benefit from concentrating more on the Pacific — and encounter fewer difficulties in the process.

Ideas of this kind have often be discussed over the past quarter century, partly because America was fed up of international commitments and inclined towards isolationism, partly as a threat.

But in the past they have failed to shake the consensus that forms the basis of the Western alliance. Without Western Europe the United States would retire from the fray as a superpower; without America Western Europe would forfeit its freedom.

As long as this premise retains validity the dispute over the West's response to events in Poland will not put the alliance out of joint.

The talks between Herr Schmidt and Mr Reagan helped to ensure that it does not do so. It will have helped to ensure that Nato Foreign Ministers reached a common approach to Poland.

The Soviet Union realises well enough what doubting Americans tend at times to forget. It is, as M. Giscard d'Estaing once put it, that when it comes to the crunch Western Europe will side with America right or wrong.

Dieter Buhl

(Die Zeit, 8 January 1982)

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THE PARTIES

Opposition still in shadow of the great years

Twenty five years after its biggest political victory, the conservative CDU/CSU is in opposition without any thrilling or confidence-inspiring blueprint for the future.

In 1957 it won an absolute majority in the Bundestag under Chancellor Konrad Adenauer.

It was eight years after the Federal Republic of Germany was founded. The country was stable, prosperous and internationally recognised.

But the elan of the early days that led to this climax in 1957 has gone.

So what has happened to the party that could well come to power either this year after *Land* elections in Hamburg and Hesse or in the general election of 1984?

Relations with the Soviet Union proceeded in an orderly fashion after Adenauer's 1955 visit to Moscow; and the Treaties of Rome (March 1957) ushered in the European Economic Community.

The dispute over compulsory military service was over; the progression system for the social security pensions had passed the Bundestag. So what more could the conservatives ask for? On election day in October 1957, the SPD was still far removed from its Godesberg Programme (1959) and its approval of Nato (1960).

The fact that the conservatives forfeited their claim to the nation's leadership during that legislative period — a claim they should have done justice to considering their absolute majority — is a different story.

Some historically important events fell during that period, ranging from Khrushchev's Berlin ultimatum via the change in the US Administration (from Eisenhower to Kennedy in 1960) all the way to the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1969.

Despite several attempts to overcome his misgivings, Adenauer could not bring himself to accept Ludwig Erhard (whom he considered inept in foreign policy) as his successor.

Looking back on the past 25 years, it is legitimate to ask whether it was really only due to the personalities involved that the conservatives did not manage to repeat their 1957 feat and corner the absolute majority in the 1961 national elections.

CDU and CSU presented a convincing image in rebuilding the western part of Germany. It was one of their great achievements to have abandoned the image of a denominational party in favour of an organisation open to all Christians and to have augmented their programme with both conservative and progressive elements. Moreover, they had some fine leadership personalities.

Despite some ideological elements, the conservatives engaged in a pragmatic domestic and foreign policy. And in 1957 it still seemed as if there were more achievements to come and as if they were capable of leading the nation into the future.

It is at this point that disappointments started cropping up.

There are, of course, personality-related problems such as the fact that the 1980 national elections made it clear that most Germans did not cherish the idea of Franz Josef Strauss as Chancellor. There is also the fact that CDU leader Helmut Kohl, who was defeated when he ran against Helmut Schmidt in 1976, was never considered *the* Chancellorship candidate by his fellow party members.

Gerhard Stoltenberg, Schleswig-Holstein premier, is also not seen as a convincing alternative to Helmut Schmidt, if opinion surveys are anything to go by.

But the problems are not due to personalities only. With their sense for pragmatism that has been their hallmark in the past, the conservatives could be expected to impart new impulses to the economy. But they, too, must admit that, should it come to the crunch, they would be unable to reduce the number of jobless.

As far back as 1974, CDU sympathiser Professor Rudolf Wildenmann, a prominent opinion researcher, said: "You could say that this party has lost much of its former identity in matters of social and foreign policy.

"And this leads to the question whether CDU/CSU is still a party for older people, small town folks and the middle class and whether it is headed by men for whom politics boils down to bargaining for tactical advantages. Is this party split within itself?"

It would be easy to say that now, eight years later, all this still applies.

But instead we should consider this: democracy being what it is, the possibility of a change in the political leadership must not be excluded — either this year after the State elections in Hamburg and in Hesse or at least after the 1984 national elections.

However, the conservatives have not *come up with any thrilling or confidence-inspiring* blueprint for the future. The elan of the early days that led to the 1957 climax has been dissipated and never again restored.

Fritz Aschka

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 5 January 1982)

SPD confronts a changing membership

One reason for the internal SPD dispute is the change in party membership pattern.

Once, skilled and white collar workers felt that they had to show solidarity with the SPD.

But since the end of the 1960s more and more academics, intellectuals, civil servants and womens libbers have been joining the party.

The traditional loyalty has, as a result, become brittle.

"The SPD finds itself in a 'pretty stable depression'," said Party Chairman Willy Brandt last October. But the crisis could be overcome by placing more emphasis on political principles and by more self-discipline.

The 1980 national election victory of the Social-Liberal coalition did not give rise to pure joy in the SPD.

The Chancellor had not pulled in as many votes as the party had hoped and which it would have needed to curb its coalition partner, the FDP.

FDP leader Hans-Dietrich Genscher, on the other hand, cornered close to three per cent more votes than in 1976.

"The effort was worthwhile and I am very pleased with the outcome, but we must not let this go to our heads," he said.

Even in the early days of the coalition bargaining, the SPD was clearly worried that the FDP would be feeling its oats, having not only built up its image with the help of the SPD but having also gained the upper hand. The Social Democrats were forced to yield on fundamental issues.

Complained SPD Deputy Chairman Wischnewski as far back as February: "The SPD has slithered into hard times, and the party is not making things easier for its Chancellor nor, for that matter, for itself."

This crisis has worsened since then, and there is talk of a split.

Only a few months before the first of the four state elections, the SPD finds itself disunited on the key issue of which voters it must appeal to.

What attitude is the former workers' party to adopt towards environmentalists, critics of the economic growth policy and all those young people who dream of a new and peaceful world? No answer has been found so far.

Willy Brandt's formula of a "clear this way and that" has made his party insecure. His alleged integration course intended to reconcile all conflicting positions and bring them under one big Social Democratic umbrella has been unsuccessful.

Integrating means bringing together and keeping together. But in reality the party is in the process of splitting into factions whose demands are increasingly irreconcilable.

The new membership structure is one reason for the internal dispute.

"Why should this new membership structure make us give up our old party virtues?" asks a worried Anke Fuchs, *state secretary in Bonn and daughter of* the former Hamburg Mayor Paul Nevermann.

Prompted by SPD right wingers, Berlin political scientist and deputy chairman of the SPD Commission for Basic Values Professor Löwenthal has posed the question as to the party's identity.

His answer will keep the SPD on its toes for the next few months until its congress next April.

As he sees it, the SPD can only overcome its identity crisis if it clearly opts for "the industrial society based on division of labour and against turning this society into a bogeyman. In other words, it must opt for the majority of the working population and against peripheral groups."

This means an unequivocal rejection of Brandt's "this way and that" thesis.

Willy Brandt's hope of leading the *party out of its doldrums would stand* a better chance of coming true if at least the leadership troika could agree on a course.

But Floor Leader Wehner and Chancellor Schmidt oppose Brandt's softness towards the party's rebels.

Schmidt (who is deputy party chairman) wants to put his ideas on the SPD crisis on paper during his holiday in Florida.

This means that there are new disputes in the offing. As Brandt once said about his successor as Chancellor: "It isn't true that I don't get along with Helmut Schmidt. The fact is that I get along with him splendidly as long as we don't talk politics."

Joachim Stoltenberg

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 31 December 1981)

Stocktaking by the FDP

For FDP Chairman and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the New Year began pretty much like the old one ended: rushing from pillar to post.

No sooner had he been at Chancellor Schmidt's side during talks with President Reagan in Washington than he had to fly back and address his party's congress in Stuttgart.

This quick change from world politics in Washington to party politics in Germany highlights one of the most important strongpoints of the FDP: its government participation.

Being part of the Bonn government benfited the Liberals last year.

A bit over a year after the national elections, opinion polls put the FDP in a fairly strong position — unlike the SPD.

Later the polls gave the party nine per cent despite the poor shape of the coalition and despite the unpopularity of the fiscal austerity package — especially among the traditional FDP voters.

In assessing their chances for this year, the Liberals will stake their hopes *on Genscher's foreign, Lambsdorff's* economic and Baum's domestic and environment policies.

They will note with some satisfaction that the continued crisis of their big coalition partner has not affected them.

But they will also have to ask themselves when this will change. And they will have to come to terms with the fact that being in better shape than their coalition partner is no guarantee of survival.

Like the other parties, the FDP will have to face four difficult state elections this year. But these elections are crucial to the existence of the party.

The advances of the Greens (environmentalists) and other alternative groupings — especially in Hamburg and Hesse — could weaken the Social Democrats but not wipe them out, unlike the FDP.

It is doubtful whether the Liberals are fully prepared for these state elections. There has been some grassroots turbulence, especially in Hamburg and Berlin.

The fact that the FDP's Berlin chapter fears erosion through its new, rather conservative, members is indicative of thn party's desolate state.

The FDP should not respond by sealing itself off from these members but by arguing it out with them and mobilising its resources nation-wide.

Perhaps Berlin is the exception that cannot be applied to the party as a whole. The Berlin debacle could be ignored if it were not for the fact that there is evidence of uncertainty in other *sectors of the FDP as well.*

True, the party has fared well with its demand for more performance, less claims on the state, cutbacks in the social security sector and a rehabilitation of public sector finances.

But, since the Freiburg Theses of 1971, the FDP has been not only a liberal but also a social party. It has been a party of labour participation, capitalism reforms and environmental protection.

How do these concepts fit together? Have all the 1971 theses been turned into political reality? Are they in fact obsolete?

Questions of this nature are now being asked increasingly loudly within the party. Genscher should listen.

Heinz Murmann

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 5 January 1982)

■ HOME AFFAIRS

Legal hitch prevents trial of SS officer

An SS officer who was too brutal for the SS and who according to evidence, played the harmonica while Jews were slaughtered on his orders, cannot be prosecuted.

He was sentenced to 10 years by an SS court in 1943. No-one can be prosecuted twice for the same offence, according to Basic Law, the 1949 Bonn constitution.

Yet his SS conviction was not because of the actual killings. It was because he has been excessively brutal in carrying out the slaughters and because he had taken photographs of murder and torture. He was in 1945 personally pardoned by Himmler.

Untersturmführer Max Täubner, 71, is still alive, although ill, in Bavaria.

There have been attempts to bring him to justice since 1959, but these have failed on the legal point.

According to evidence in a Stuttgart war crimes trial, Täubner led an SS vehicle maintenance squad on a tour of the Ukraine, killing Jews.

Out of hatred for the Jews and loyalty to Hitler and Himmler, he had wanted to kill 20,000.

He reached nearly 1,000 and prided himself on photos of torture and massacre.

Now some of Täubner's junior officers are in the dock in Stuttgart.

Johann Hermann, 65 is one of the accused. He seems overcome by shame when mention is made of one incident in which he took part in autumn 1941 in the Ukraine.

He shot from behind, a shot aimed at the heart, a Jewess standing on the edge of a mass grave. A number of his comrades aimed at their victims' heads.

All the victims, mainly women and children, had been beaten and humiliated by before they died.

The SS felt Täubner had overstepped the mark. He was arrested. In 1943 Täubner, an engineer, was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment by an SS court in Munich.

The Munich court ruled that the Jews who died were no loss to mankind but that Täubner had allowed his men to behave in a crude and unsoldierly manner and thus failed in his duty as an officer.

His behaviour, the bench said, was altogether unbefitting of a man of honour.

In the Stuttgart case he was merely questioned at his home by the examining magistrate.

Täubner, who was seriously injured in active service after his pardon, claims as a result of his injury to be virtually unable to recall anything that happened to him between 1937 and the end of the war.

Hermann is saying nothing to the Stuttgart trial — on his counsel's advice. He was only a minor, peripheral member of the 30-man squad whose role was in fact merely to service the vehicles of the 1st SS Brigade.

The main accused, Heinrich Hesse, is said to have been Täubner's deputy and one of his four or five cronies who invariably joined him on his gruesome missions.

Hesse had a heart attack in 1974. He is a pale figure, 70, and only fit to give evidence for a few hours at a time.

He, Täubner and others are alleged to have beaten and shot to death a group of Jews in a potato cellar in Alexandriya. They are said to have swung clubs at their victims' genitals.

This massacre was only brought to an end when other soldiers, and not officers, intervened. They were unable to stand the screams of the bruised, battered and dying.

The following day Hesse is said, on orders from Täubner, to have shot a number of survivors. He then claims to have asked a superior officer whether more humane methods of killing might not be used.

In connection with another mass execution of 30 Jews with which he was associated Hesse admitted to the court:

"I regret to say that I was used to saying yessir and carrying out orders."

By and large, ex-SS Hauptscharführer Hesse does not deny having committed the offences of which he is accused.

Yet with a gesture of defiance Hesse is also on record as having said that under Täubner he had learnt what it was to carry out orders properly.

He chose to obey a sadistic SS officer who described himself as a believer in God but was termed a psychopath by a *fellow-officer*.

The SS court had said Täubner felt that the Wehrmacht was too sentimental towards the Jews.

On his orders Jews had to try and kill each other with a spade. The survivor was promised he would be spared. At times Täubner played the harmonica as he looked on.

Täubner either ordered or allowed one of his men to pick up children by the legs, swing them into the air and shoot them. Their mothers had to look on.

The court found that probably a single member of the squad, one only, had not been guilty of any offence in the Ukraine.

He, a witness by the name of Schumann, told Täubner: "I've not come to Russia to shoot women and children." Nothing happened to him as a result.

Most witnesses called by the court are either unwilling or unable to clarify this crucial issue. Old men forget. They might otherwise themselves land in the dock 40 years after the event.

Täubner himself, interrogated by the court in his Starnberg apartment, hopelessly contradicted himself. His testimony is likely to prove of doubtful value when the court reaches a decision.

But the bench can hardly, on the strength of the evidence so far, find that either Hesse or Hermann were obliged to carry out orders against their will.

The case has dragged on for months, so let a mention be made of Günther Reinecke, the SS judge who ruled in 1943 that Täubner deserved a prison sentence, but not for killing Jews.

Dr Reinecke was classified after the war as a Nazi fellow-traveller. He set up in legal practice.

The Bavarian Justice Ministry did not strip him of his right to practise as a lawyer until 1961, when it ruled that the marked racial hatred of his 1943 summing-up disqualified him for the profession.

In 1962 he appealed to the Bavarian lawyers' court of appeal against the Ministry ruling and won.

The appeals court was unable to disprove Reinecke's defence that a death sentence (which Täubner richly deserved) would almost certainly have been overridden by Himmler, who took a personal interest in what was a spectacular case.

The anti-Semitic passages had been necessary to make his ruling appear credible and to be able to sentence Täubner to a stiff 10-year sentence.

Other former SS judges lent support to Reinecke's line of argument.

It is worth noting that the Munich court of appeal did not see fit to consider any other of the many sentences Reinecke passed in his SS career.

So there were no contradictions of the testimony of his former fellow-judges that in private Reinecke, who is now dead, opposed persecution of the Jews, advocated proceedings against concentration camp guards and even tried to issue a warrant to arrest Eichmann.

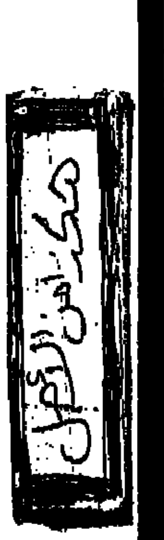
The 1962 appeal, details of which were read to the Stuttgart court, was hard to swallow for many observers. So was much else.

At some time or other in the autumn of 1941 a Ukrainian Jew came up to the men of Täubner's squad and asked them to kill him now they had killed his entire family.

He was told to clear off; the squad were not a pack of murderers.

Peter Henkel

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 22 December 1981)



Minister lays down the law to prosecutors

To deny that Nazi crimes and acts of violence were ever committed or to try to play them down is to be an indictable offence, Bonn Justice Minister Jürgen Schmude has instructed public prosecutors.

He has circularised legislation to this effect and writes in the journal *Recht und Politik* that glossing over Nazi crimes is an offence against peaceful coexistence and the upholding of human rights.

Herr Schmude, who is a Social Democrat, has also announced that legal provisions will be made to prosecute the manufacturers and importers of Nazi material.

Between September 1978 and October 1981, he writes, 19 people died as a result of criminal activities by right-wing extremists.

Five offenders themselves died, while 223 people were injured in bomb raids or shooting incidents involving right-wingers.

Since 1978 the number of offenders to be sentenced had totalled 631. In 97 cases court rulings might still be appealed against.

Ninety-two cases were still in progress and preliminary proceedings being undertaken against 133 people.

Twenty were serving prison sentences for offences committed as right-wingers, 40 were remanded in custody. Sixteen were wanted by the police.

In 1980 the Minister said there were 75 right-wing extremist organisations in the Federal Republic of Germany. Their combined membership totalled just over 20,000. *ddp*

(Mannheimer Morgen, 5 January 1982)

■ THE WORK FORCE

Early retirement seen as way to more jobs – except by pension funds

Early retirement has become a fashionable idea to try and contain unemployment.

The political parties all feel obliged to go on record in one way or another backing the idea.

Most Germans are against working less so the work available can be shared round.

So are the pension funds.

"We just cannot afford to have people retiring even earlier," says Helmut Meinhold, chairman of the pension funds' advisory panel.

If the age were lowered, pensions would have to be cut.

As a rule in Germany, both men and women used to retire at 65. Now few wait that long.

However, many experts feel that further reductions are one way of preventing unemployment rising from the present 1.5 million to two or even three millions.

When Heiner Geissler, general secretary of the Christian Democrats, discussed the subject on television, he made retirement at 58 sound positively idyllic.

Grandparents would then be able to look after the grandchildren again, he said, while vacating jobs that would enable parents to work for a living.

Social Democrats Friedhelm Farthmann, Labour Minister of North Rhine-Westphalia, puts it more succinctly: "*We need* the jobs for the young."

Christian Democrat Norbert Blüm fears there may be a class struggle between those who have jobs and those who don't. It could well end up being a struggle between young and old.

Age groups are lopsided as it is, posing problems on the labour market and in funding pensions, for instance, and the problems that will need facing are aggravated by the economic crisis.

The burdens that lie ahead are undeniable and inevitable. Over the current decade more than 800,000 more young people will come on to the labour market than older working people reach retirement age.

Roughly a million and a half people are already registered unemployed, and their prospects are bleak. The Nuremberg experts say it would take an economic growth rate of 3.5 per cent to keep the current labour force in employment.

Growth of that size sounds at present wildly optimistic. Last year saw an economic decline; this year even optimists are not expecting more than one per cent growth.

Bright ideas on how to deal with the problems have grown scarce since the Federal Labour Office listed eight sectors in which the state, society and industry could combat unemployment in 1978.

This catalogue of proposals has taken a knock now that the public sector is running short of cash and higher public-sector staff recruitment and deficit spending by the government have proved a failure.

Hopes are now concentrated on incentives to private investment and a redistribution of the jobs already available.

All political parties now feel obliged to go on record as endorsing a shorter working life in one way or another.

"We aim to gradually reduce the age limits for early, or staggered retirement," said the Social Democrats before the 1980 1980 general election.

They prudently added the proviso that this would be subject to reductions being financially possible and to other riders.

The social committees of the Christian Democrats, a constituent organisation headed by Dr Blüm, called on their party in the Bundestag to draft legislation on a further reduction in the age limit for early retirement.

The Free Democrats have likewise included a redistribution of work, a scarce commodity, in their new employment policy package.

"Bringing forward retirement from 63 to 61 would cost the pension funds DM2bn a year," says a pensions expert at the Bonn Labour Ministry.

This is money no-one has to spare, and the pension funds face trouble enough already. The generation now reaching retirement is the generation that was reduced in the Second World War, yet the funds have been unable to set money aside.

By the end of 1985 they are due to run into financial trouble again unless wages increase at a rate of well over five per cent a year.

Yet early retirement is pretty well an established fact. Men and women used to retire as a rule at 65; now 65 is the exception.

In 1980 new male old-age pensioners totalled 304,000. Only 13.8 per cent of them waited until 65 before doing so, while 12.4 per cent opted to retire early at 63.

Nearly three out of four left work earlier including 41 per cent who drew a disability pension and six per cent who were pensioned off early because they were unable to work in their trades or professions.

Eight per cent were retired by their employers at 59 and qualified for an early pension at 60. Over 15 per cent retired early at 60 on grounds of disablement.

In view of the pension funds' financial straits, the fewer contributions and the longer period during which the pensioner would actuarially survive to cash his pension cheque, the pension cut would be substantial.

When the option of early retirement at 63 was introduced in 1972 the pension cut was estimated at one and a half per cent for each of the two years involved.

This was a cut recouped with little difficulty when the pensions were next increased.

But further cuts are now expected to cost between five and seven per cent per year, which could have an altogether more dramatic effect.

Bringing retirement forward would not have any real effect on the labour market unless the cut were by, say, five years, when pensions would need to be cut by at least a quarter.

Yet as it is, the only pensioners who retire early are the ones who can afford to do so. The figures tell a tale that can hardly be misinterpreted.

Workers who retired early in 1980 did so, on average, on a pension of DM1,365 per month. Those who had stuck it out until 65 retired on an average pension of DM1,056 a month.

Since neither the state nor the pension funds nor contributors themselves can afford to pay the price of early retirement, another source of finance would be required.

The choice is strictly limited. Most plans for shorter working lives are based on the assumption of higher additional contributions by the employer.

But since it takes two to make a bargain plans along these lines have seldom been put into practice.

Basically, schemes of this kind have been introduced in only two industries: beer and cigarettes. And breweries and the tobacco trade are both in a sound financial position.

Günter Döding of NGG, the food and catering workers' union, which negotiated the agreements, has been eager to suggest to other trade unions that some such scheme would be a fine bargaining counter for the 1982 round of wage talks.

But he has met with scant success. The other unions are not interested. Neither are the employers.

By the terms of these agreements, which are now binding on the parties to collective bargaining in these two industries, men and women in the tobacco industry, for instance, can opt for retirement an extra two years earlier.

So men can retire at 61 and women at 58. If they prefer to work part-time (half their previous working week), they may do so on full pay for these last two years.

If they choose to retire early, they will draw 75 per cent of their previous wages or salaries until reaching statutory retirement age.

But by no means all tobacco workers have chosen to do so. Initially 70 per cent settled for one option or the other; now the figure is 82 per cent.

Just over half preferred to work half-days and draw full pay.

For the industry this experiment, which dated back to the 1966/67 economic recession, has proved less expensive than expected.

Cigarette manufacturers had expected it to increase their wage bills by two per cent.

It has been only one per cent.

Manufacturers are starting to set aside reserves to foot the bill for the expected increase in those eligible for the option.

"If excise duties on tobacco had been increased earlier we would no longer have signed the agreement," says Herr Schwahn, spokesman for the manufacturers' association.

At Daimler-Benz a new house agreement is now in force under which shift workers, arguably a special case because of the strain over the years, can gradually retire early.

Daimler-Benz staff working three shifts can opt to work half-days for the last three years with the company.

For six months they do so on full pay, then for 10 months with a two-per-cent wage cut and for the remaining 20 months at 80 per cent.

Alternatively they can retire fully two years before the statutory minimum retirement age.

This house agreement with the prime German industrial blue chip has impressed IG Metall, the metalworkers' union and sired proposals for pensions as part of a new wage agreement for iron and steel, engineering and all allied industries.

The idea is for all metalworkers to be entitled to retire at 60 on full pay until they qualify for the statutory old-age pension at 63.

Manufacturers are to fund the scheme, either directly or via a fund, but agreement has yet to be reached, so details have not been finalised.

The trade union reckons the idea will cost the industry as a whole 0.5 per cent extra in wages. Manufacturers have costed it and reckon it will cost twice as much.

That would be either DM4bn or DM8bn a year respectively.

But IG Metall does not propose to press for early retirement this time round. All regions of the union are in favour of the scheme, says union spokesman Barozynski, but there have been distinct differences of opinion.

Many unions are coming to terms with the idea that the 1982 round of wage talks may not even result in terms that keep pace with the rising cost of living.

So members are not going to be enthusiastic about wage increases being set aside towards the cost of early retirement, and agreements along these lines might well be rejected by the membership.

Employers' associations are staunchly opposed to any idea of a general reduction in working lives at their expense. They are opposed for two reasons, explains a leading official.

The first is one of policy. It would be bad policy to agree to an arrangement that would bolster the tendency towards making the employers shoulder an ever heavier burden.

The second is that the Federal Republic of Germany already has, when all factors are taken into consideration, the shortest working life of any country in the world.

This is an achievement on which employers have no desire to improve.

IG Metall is not expecting early retirement to work wonders either. The union feels employers will simply not hire new men to replace those who retire early in one way or another.

But since they would have rationalised to a greater extent than might otherwise have been the case they would have to make more new hirings faster if the economy were to stage a recovery.

So the prospects of shorter working lives are bleak. Nearly everyone feels the idea is right but no-one wants to foot the bill.

The council of economic advisers to the government feel, moreover, that purely defensive strategies, such as early retirement, would squander too much capital.

This cash would be better spent creating new jobs.

In the end both approaches will probably need trying. Every opportunity of investment in new jobs must be grasped, while available work must be redistributed.

Qualified workers cannot simply be stockpiled for a decade.

It is reliably forecast that there will be a surplus of labour throughout the 80s but a shortage during the 90s when children of smaller families reach working age.

So policymakers shrewdly recommend taking no irrevocable decisions. Any action taken must be capable of being revised or revoked.

Wolfgang Mauersberg

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 2 January 1982)

■ BUSINESS

A good year for trade fairs despite some hiccups along the line

West Germany has maintained its reputation as the world's leading trade fair nation.

Last year was broadly satisfactory, so no one can yet talk of serious economic downturn.

Even the Hanover Fair, which caters for a wide range of industries and might arguably be more vulnerable than specialist fairs to any general blow, did well.

There were some disappointements, including the Interself Hobby-Messe in Essen. It will not be held again.

And in Nuremberg, exhibitors showed so little interest in a proposed electronics and consumer goods fair that in the end it was not even held.

There were also fewer visitors by far at the Cologne sporting goods fair.

Hanover did well because foreign demand, i.e. exports, remained healthy. The export trade was a mainstay of continued good business there.

Hanover has lost none of its importance as Germany's industrial shop window, both when times are good and when they are undeniably hard.

The same is true of the major international specialist trade fairs in Munich, Cologne and Frankfurt.

Specialist trade fairs at the smaller exhibition centres, such as Hamburg, Nuremberg, Stuttgart, Offenbach, Essen, Friedrichshafen and Saarbrücken, have also held their own.

Berlin, for various reasons a special case, will need to carry on working hard at keeping its brand-new Kongresshalle and the old exhibition centre busy.

In 1981 it largely succeeded in doing so. The international radio show was one of the highlights of the trade fair season.

The Cologne sporting goods fair was hit by a similar fair in Munich and the number of visitors was down heavily. In 1982 it will be held for three days only.

Several new fairs were launched in 1981, however, and there were new congresses too, which are increasingly interlocking with trade fairs.

Now the *Alte Oper* in Frankfurt has been reopened the city hosts not only trade fairs but also congresses.

It remains to be seen how new fairs, such as Fabrik '81, the slot machine fair or the various electronics fairs, progress and whether they establish themselves.

It also remains to be seen whether the investment in one new congress or exhibition centre after another proves profitable.

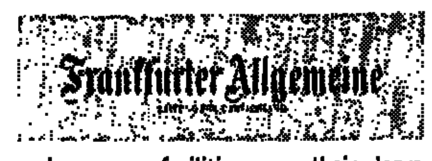
The Trade Fairs Association says that by the mid-80s a further DM1.4bn at today's prices will have been invested in new installations and facilities.

The result will be an extra 160,000 square metres of covered exhibition space, or 40 acres, over and above the existing two million or so square metres (500 acres).

As long as the investment is funded out of trade fair companies' earnings there can be no objection, but unfortunately the taxpayer is increasingly called on to foot the bill for plans which are too ambitious.

The plans are drawn up either by city councils or by the management of exhibition centre companies, usually owned by the local authority. They are not certain of success.

Initially the new exhibition centres



and congress facilities open their doors and wait for customers. It takes time before they run at a profit.

Exhibition centre organisers in Berlin, Frankfurt and Munich frankly admit they are going to be in the red for the next few years because of their new projects.

This would be no problem if there were any guarantee the investment might pay for itself in the foreseeable future.

No-one can give this guarantee, especially as the years of continuous upswing are over. So savings are being made, which is just as it should be.

A trade fair need not be a showcase in fancy dress, as Herr Stauber of the Frankfurt trade fair company put it, while Herr Schoop, his Düsseldorf opposite number, favours what he calls a "human" trade fair.

Munich's Herr Marzin warns that economic recession must not be allowed to become a trade fair recession.

They all see even better service to customers and the opening-up of new markets as opportunities of keeping West Germany attractive as a trade fair centre.

Over the past few years there has been a steady increase in the numbers of foreign exhibitors and visitors to trade fairs in nearly all German cities.

This is surely an indication of the success of fair authorities who have been keen to do more than just sell as many square metres of stand space as they could.

The rethink and structural change go even further. Many trade fair organisers still see exhibitors and manufacturers as the main customers, but visitors are increasingly being discovered as clients.

The fairs that failed in 1981 were fairs at which the organisers were interested only in as many exhibitors as possible and forgot, or so it would seem, about the visitors.

The wholesale and retail trade as the main customer of specialist fairs in particular is no longer prepared to waste time and money on trade fairs that have little to offer.

The trade still appears at major fairs and exhibitions, but no longer in serried ranks; only the major buyers come. There may be fewer trade visitors, but they are the ones who matter.

Industrial exhibitors no longer need to offer them a full-scale show, which is a blessing for the expenses exhibitors run up.

Stands no longer need to be as expensively and superfluously decorated as they used to be, and this trend was clearly observable at many trade fairs in 1981.

For the time being there need be no fears of a major decline in the trade fair business. Some companies have stepped up trade fair spending to boost sales wherever they can.

Domestic trade fairs are partly the loser here, though. More and more domestic manufacturers are attending trade fairs abroad, especially as the Bonn Economic Affairs Ministry can help out with grants in such cases.

This is an opportunity industry should not miss, just as exhibitors stand to benefit from competition between fair organisers in various parts of Germany.

It is certainly not enough to lament the high cost of trade fairs and exhibitions. Companies should be prepared to stop exhibiting at fairs where they have merely booked stands in the past because their competitors were there too.

You can't be everywhere, as more and more exhibitors are beginning to realise, and so are their customers.

This is a challenge to trade fair organisers to redouble their efforts. Trade fairs are not an end in themselves; they are merely a service facility.

Karl Ohem

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 23 December 1981)

Firms keyed up to electronic pitch

This year more than 100,000 electronic typewriters will be sold in the Federal Republic of Germany, or about *DM300m* of business.

Three manufacturers, Triumph Adler, Olympia and Olivetti, will take the lion's share, and for 1982 their respective share of the market is virtually a foregone conclusion.

Olivetti should corner over 35 per cent, with Olympia and Triumph Adler following with 30 and 20 per cent respectively.

The remainder will be shared by IBM, Hermes, Facit and two Japanese manufacturers, Brother and Silver Reed.

This being so, the advertising war that has been waged over the past few weeks and months does not really seem to make much sense.

But there are more than two million secretarial jobs in the country, so there is clearly good business yet to be sewn up, and the competitors are at the ready.

The close season is over, the chase is on, and some pundits say it will be hot war and not just a war between advertisers.

Much is at stake for the two German manufacturers. It may even be make or break. Triumph Adler in particular failed to keep up with developments.

This failure to make the change in time from electric to electronic typewriters could cost them dearly.

Olivetti has been selling the new generation since 1978 and Olympia followed suit a little over a year later, but Triumph Adler did not clamber on to the bandwaggon until the late summer of 1981.

In both German companies the change-over has been accompanied by tough disputes within the firm, with top-flight managers being fired by the dozen.

Given the losses both are accumulating, this is hardly surprising. Last year Olympia made a loss of DM156m; this year they would count themselves lucky if losses remained within double figures.

The prospects look even bleaker at Triumph Adler, where last year losses were only DM86m but, or so reports from the company's Nuremberg head office suggest, this year they will be higher.

No-one knows how much. *Der Spiegel*, the Hamburg news weekly, has said Triumph are operating at a loss of DM1m a day, and even this estimate could prove too optimistic.

There are persistent rumours that Volkswagen, the parent company, are planning to bail Triumph Adler out with between DM600m and DM800m.

Olivetti, an Italian company that was for long an outsider in Germany, has been alone in steadily increasing both turnover and profits in recent years.

What is even worse than the operational losses, there are, and have for some time been, persistent reports of allegedly imminent and actual redundancies.

Triumph Adler seems sure to cut its payroll by 3,000, while Olympia will at least be converting its Leer works into an assembly unit, which would mean about 650 dismissals.

Even then, it is said at Olympia's Wilhelmshaven head office, there can be no guarantee that the Leer works will definitely be kept going.

So it is, perhaps, a little easier to understand the efforts the trade has been putting into the current advertising campaign.

Every day of the week there are full-page advertisements for one or other of the Triumph Adler and Olympia electronic typewriters in some daily newspaper or magazine or other.

An American competitor reckons the two companies were too late in jumping on to the bandwaggon and now want to join the gravy train whatever the cost.

But even Olivetti, the market leader, has resumed the advertising campaign it ran last spring.

Deutsche Olivetti in Frankfurt say they want to hold on to their share of the market at all cost. Being one jump ahead of the others technologically is not enough; they must hold their own in advertising too.

IBM are strangely quiet, arguably because they have missed this particular boat, which in its turn may be because the US company reigned supreme for decades in the German and international markets.

This was mainly due to the golfball for which IBM held worldwide patent rights. IBM are either reluctant or unable to part company with this money-spinner.

The IBM 50s and 60s certainly still have golfballs rather than the more advanced typewheel.

What should one bear in mind when buying an electronic typewriter? What features should it have? First, it must have a typewheel made of synthetic material.

Then it should have both internal and external storage facilities, of which the internal capacity should be at least sufficient to store a secretary's daily output of, say, between 15,000 and 16,000 units.

The display must also be large enough to indicate longer words before they are put to paper. This matters because the opportunity to correct copy can best be utilised when the display facility is adequate.

As for the price, an office electronic typewriter nowadays costs between

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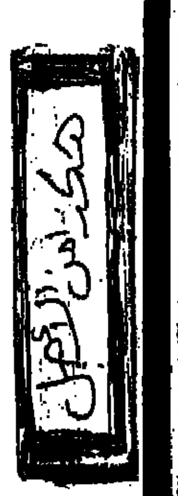
DM2,000 and DM6,000, depending on what it has to offer.

In comparison with a conventional electric typewriter this is undeniably a substantial difference. But there are no signs that this state of affairs is likely to change before long.

Manufacturers agree that dealers' profit margins would otherwise be too low, and since electronic typewriting presupposes thinking in terms of electronics, manufacturers feel they must rely on dealers to provide both service and advice.

Hans-D. Czaplinski

(General-Anzeiger, 5 January 1982)



■ THE ECONOMY

Interest rates ready to fall, but the question is: how far?

Interest rates are expected to fall during the year from the record levels of last year.

The drop has so far been slow, but is expected to quicken.

According to the Commerzbank, the average rate last September on fixed-interest bonds peaked at 12.4 per cent. On bonds with four years or more to run, it was 11.5 per cent.

Those with cash to spare in September were able to earn the highest interest in real terms (that is, after inflation) since the Second World War.

How far rates will fall depends on which expert is believed.

Frankfurt economist Wolfram Engels is one of the boldest: he expects the interest on capital to decline to seven per cent at the end of the year. It could, he says, go below seven and possibly get within striking distance of six.

Professor Engels has stuck his neck out so far that sceptics feel he is keener to make a name for himself than to make a serious forecast.

If he is correct, "we would then have deflation," Deutsche Bank's F. Wilhelm Christians coolly counters. He is one of the two spokesmen for the board of the bank that most accurately forecast 1981's high interest rates — and made a handsome profit as a result.

But what prospects are there really of a substantial fall in interest rates? Last year the Federal Republic of Germany was strongly dependent on external factors.

First thre was the heavy current account deficit for 1980, which dealt a lasting blow to foreign confidence in the strength of the deutschemark.

The result was an irresistible increase in the exchange rate of the world's foremost trading currency, the dollar. It peaked at 2.57 against the mark.

But another reason why the dollar was so strong was the unremitting policy of stability and high interest rates pursued by the Federal Reserve Board's Paul A. Volcker.

It pushed the prime rate up to an unprecedented 21.5 per cent. With gnashing of teeth the Bundesbank in Frankfurt could do nothing but look on as the dollar attracted foreign capital as by a magic spell.

The trend was boosted by high hopes placed in the Reagan administration in the first half of 1981.

The deutschemark's Frankfurt custodians had no option but to make their currency more attractive unless they were prepared to let events take their course and an outflow of capital further worsen the current account balance.

The only way in which this could be done was, as in America, to increase interest rates, which peaked in September.

Commerzbank, one of Germany's Big Three clearing banks, noted in its 1981 stock exchange review that the year had seen an interest rate all-time high for the deutschemark.

The average rate on fixed-interest bonds was 12.4 per cent, and 11.5 per cent on bonds with four years or more to run at one point.

Those with cash to spare in September 1981 were able to earn the highest interest rates in real terms (i. e. after allowing for inflation) since the Second World War.

Those who needed to raise cash, and they included the Bonn government at regular intervals throughout 1981, had to pay the highest interest rates since the Federal Republic of Germany was set up in 1949.

But the turning point had already come. The German mark may have been weak against the dollar but it was still strong in Europe and it earned exporters handsome profits.

They did good business and had no need (because the mark had nosedived against the dollar) to make price concessions, so both turnover and earnings benefited.

The turning point made its mark in October, when the surplus of exports over imports reached a post-war record of DM5.3bn. The current account was back in the black too.

This trend continued in November. The trading surplus was DM3.9bn and the current account was again in credit.

The current account deficit that had mounted up over the year declined in this period from DM29bn to DM22bn and is continuing to decline.

To the extent to which the mark's standing in the international monetary system is consolidated the Bundesbank will be relieved of its obligation to bolster it by maintaining high interest rates.

The Bundesbank is reluctant to ease the pressure prematurely. It suspended the normal Lombard rate, the rate at which it loaned banks cash against fixed-interest stock as security, in February 1981.

It had stood at nine per cent and was replaced by a special Lombard rate, geared to overnight borrowing rates, of 12 per cent.

Since autumn 1981 it has slowly but surely been reduced, first to 11, then to 10.5 per cent.

At the same time the Bundesbank made it clear, with a fresh round of wage negotiations around the corner, that there was no intention whatever of departing from strict priority for stability.

Yet lower interest rates are sure to come. Germany is growing less dependent on foreign capital markets as the mark regains strength and the current account deficit is reduced.

Besides, interest rates in the United States are falling too, at least for the moment.

If they were to increase again in 1982, as Henry Kaufman of New York expects, it would not, he says, be a sign of a stronger dollar.

It would be a clear sign that US capital markets had lost confidence in the Reagan administration's powers of economic recovery.

In Germany the economy is still a little weak in the New Year, so private and industrial demand for cash is likely to remain subdued.

When everyone expects interest rates to fall the problem of government indebtedness tends to be ignored by the market, according to Bethmann, the Frankfurt private bankers.

This is what Bethmann say has happened in the past when interest rates were on the way down.

Yet structurally the capital market is in a less healthy position than it was in the early 70s. On average fixed-interest bonds have four and a half years left to run, as against nine years a decade ago.

This is a result of the periods of high interest rates in 1973/74 and 1980/81, which prompted borrowers to raise cash for as short a period as possible.

But pressure on the market from capital repayment commitments and the demand for financing new debts and refinancing old ones is correspondingly high.

Bethmann note that German investors have been encouraged by high interest rates to expect a high real return on capital loaned.

Earnings after inflation have been as high as six per cent. Investors are unlikely to be satisfied with less than three per cent.

Since inflation is expected to run at five per cent this year, that would mean interest rates should not go lower than eight per cent.

Since interest rates are still roughly 10 per cent, that still leaves leeway. If rates were to fall to eight per cent, the bond market would show substantial capital appreciation.

This potential would help to boost stock exchange quotations for company shares too. So it is hardly surprising that Herr Christians of Deutsche Bank begs to differ from Professor Engels.

He reckons the lights are changing from amber to green for both bond and stock markets.

Hans Pfremm

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, 1 January 1982)

Improvement in sight, but later in year

The economy will not show any real signs of improvement until the second half of 1982, industrial opinion agrees, and growth over the year as a whole will be marginal.

The Cologne *Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft*, a research unit of the industrial confederation, polled 22 industrial associations at the year's end.

An overwhelming majority of them are not expecting growth in 1982 to exceed 0.5 per cent, although views naturally differ from one industry to the next.

All agree on two points. The upturn will only come about when earnings improve over a longer period and the climate for investment is more favourable.

Mechanical engineering does not expect any joy at all on the home market in the year ahead. The public sector has cut investment and the profits of private industry have taken a knock.

Exports, the Mechanical Engineering Manufacturers Association says, are not expected to increase as fast as they have been doing.

All told, the employment position should remain steady, with orders currently sufficient to keep the industry in business and its payroll in work for six months.

Turnover in 1982 is expected to be three per cent up at roughly DM125bn.

The construction industry, which is the country's largest, takes a most pessimistic view of prospects in the year ahead.

In 1981 orders were down 18 per cent, which meant an estimated 200,000 men would be made redundant, and the trend continued to be most discouraging.

The Construction Industry Association expects even more companies to call in the receiver this year; last year 1,500 construction companies went to the wall.

The only ray of hope to be given a mention is construction abroad. In 1981 it accounted for DM10bn in turnover.

Retail traders depend on consumer trends. The council of economic advisers to the Bonn Economic Affairs Ministry has forecast a 0.5-per-cent decline in consumer spending.

So the Retail Trade Association expects business to take a knock in 1982, but not as serious a setback as in 1981, when turnover was down by two to three per cent in real terms.

The Association of Wholesale and Foreign Trade says it would rate even the slightest increase in turnover in real terms a success.

In 1981 business was down over five per cent in real terms. Export hopes are subdued after encouraging growth in the past year.

Export prospects will continue to be decided mainly by business with industrialised countries outside the EEC, while Opec and Third World threshold countries remain steady export customers.

A subdued note is sounded by the *Zentralverband des Deutschen Handwerks*. It represents craft and service trades such as bakers, confectioners or plumbers and electricians.

It expects no improvement, largely because there will be 40 per cent less business from the construction industry.

There is no hope of more staff being hired as long as interest rates and profits fail to show signs of lasting improvement.

The insurance trade is an exception to the rule. It looks forward to good business and expects two-figure growth rates in some sectors, such as private health insurance and property insurance.

Motor insurance premiums having been recently revised, insurers are confident this side of the business will stay profitable at the present premiums until the end of the year.

Motorists are driving less, which means fewer claims.

In life assurance, growth rates should be lower because earnings are unlikely to increase as fast as they have done in recent years.

Horst Biallowons

(Die Welt, 29 December 1981)

■ PERSPECTIVE

Changing alignments of the non-aligned

Great events cast their shadows in advance, we are assured with a flourish from Baghdad, where next September nearly 100 Third World heads of state and government are due to attend the non-aligned conference.

The official announcement even refers to a Year of the Non-Aligned.

The bid to establish a kind of Third Force between the two superpowers locked in East-West combat yet outside the blocs dates back to the legendary show of Afro-Asian solidarity at Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955.

The first non-aligned summit intended to be worldwide in scope was held in Belgrade in 1961.

It was led by Yugoslavia, India and Egypt as personified respectively by their three charismatic founding fathers Tito, Nehru and Nasser.

There were 25 delegations in Belgrade. Over the past 20 years the number of non-aligned countries has increased to nearly 100.

Non-aligned summits have since been held in Cairo in 1964, in Lusaka in 1970, in Algiers in 1973, in Colombo in 1976 and in Havana in 1979.

Three years later the largest summit yet is to be held in Baghdad.

The non-aligned movement has never been a homogenous unit, and as its ranks have swelled to almost treble figures, comprising two thirds of mankind, ideological differences have grown increasingly clear.

It currently embraces a wide range of countries extending from Cuba, Vietnam (the country that has annexed Cambodia) and others leaning towards the Soviet Union to more pro-Western states such as Saudi Arabia or Singapore.

Alongside emancipation from great-power interests, war was declared on colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism as a unifying slogan.

But with the accomplishment of decolonisation these slogans were reduced to mere lip service.

Calls for economic collaboration within the framework of a New International Economic Order have similarly remained largely rhetorical.

There has been no shortage of impassioned attacks on the industrialised countries of the West, coupled with clamours for a redistribution of wealth from the northern to the southern hemisphere.

But one of the key problems many non-aligned states face is the price of petroleum, which has been increased at an ever-increasing pace by the Opec countries.

Out of respect for Arab members of the non-aligned movement this issue has so far been dealt with only noncommittally on the outskirts of the summit.

As host to the conference, then president of the organisation for a three-year term, Fidel Castro did all he could to sell the non-aligned countries the Soviet Union as their natural ally in the struggle against imperialism.

Delegates were to be disciplined and manipulated at Moscow's behest. With Cuba as the movement's coordinator the Soviet cat was let well and truly among the non-aligned pigeons.

The non-aligned states assembled at Havana accepted the bid. They did so with growing scepticism, but when it came to the point they let Fidel have it his way.

Since this nadir the desire to offer resistance has regained strength. Third World countries began to realise that as the Kremlin viewed and planned matters there was no place for non-alignment or a pluralistic world system.

In terms of the monocentric hegemonial ambitions of the Soviet empire a Third Force between East and West could at best be accepted as a transitional phase.

Countries were just coming round to this point of view when, at the end of 1979, the Afghanistan shock triggered an abrupt breakthrough to a more realistic view of world affairs.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was undertaken with the most brutal disregard yet for a country's non-aligned status.

For two decades non-aligned conferences had referred solely to American imperialism. Now, reluctantly, it was gradually realised that for many members of the movement Soviet imperialism was the graver danger.

Had not the West been determined to offer resistance, they further came to realise, Moscow's policy of expansion and conquest would long since have extended to other countries that were still non-aligned.

This was clear from resolutions passed at the Delhi conference and from three UN General Assembly resolutions calling for a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.

In the non-aligned movement the pro-Moscow group has been pushed into the background as a bloc within the non-aligned bloc. The hitherto silent majority has come to the fore.

It is opposed to a further move by the movement in the direction indicated by Cuba, Vietnam, Angola and Mozambique.

The moderates, including Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Pakistan and the five Asean states as activists, advocates a reconsideration of and return to the original ideals of non-alignment.

So the Baghdad summit may either prove a forum at which differences of opinion are discussed or a backdrop for a proliferation of verbiage that merely brushes tension under the carpet.

India, with a population of nearly 700m, remains a special case. It lays claim to non-alignment as the guiding principle of its policy despite its ties with Moscow by virtue of the 1971 pact.

In the worldwide dispute over Afghanistan Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, has performed feats of acrobatics even though she too would sooner see the Soviet Union quit the sub-continent one day than tomorrow.

Other developing countries, while vociferously attacking the arms programmes of the major industrialised countries, are themselves accumulating increasingly modern and comprehensive arms stockpiles.

According to United Nations statistics the Third World now accounts for [illegible] per cent of the world's arms purchases. Yugoslavia, a founder-member of the movement, exports arms to the Third World as a major source of export earnings.

Although Belgrade in particular declared non-alignment to be the crux of its foreign policy, Yugoslavia is now insecure and disappointed by solidarity from the non-aligned ranks and on the lookout for an increasingly European orientation.

Thus much in the non-aligned movement is ambiguous and unclear, it is all the more surprising that Bonn on every conceivable occasion makes a point of paying it compliments.

Officially, Bonn never seems to tire of praising the non-aligned movement as a factor for stability in world affairs.

Seldom, in an after-dinner speech to a visiting statesman from the Third World, does Foreign Minister Genscher not refer to the policy of true non-alignment.

He praises it as a policy opposed to all attempts to establish predominance and spheres of influence.

This is a point that bears consideration. It goes beyond a non-committal declaration of intent in that Herr Genscher, in his roundabout tactful way, warns against the hegemonial aspirations of the one power for which non-alignment can be but an illusion.

Wolfgang Höpker

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, 8 January 1982)

Towards a united Europe, but not at any price

Decades of bids to foster East-West detente and even the 1975 Helsinki conference on security and cooperation in Europe have failed to make much difference to the division of Europe.

It is a division that was in effect agreed between the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union at the Yalta summit in 1945.

Chancellor Schmidt in recalling the historic agreements reached in 1945 by Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill in the Black Sea resort, said Europe has been divided into spheres of influence and any attempt to change them could mean war.

President Mitterrand of France in the New Year called for Yalta to be superseded.

But he said that we must never confuse what we are aiming at with reality as it is today.

In much the same way as Chancellor Schmidt, the French President said: "In order for peace to prevail the balance of power between the two powers that dominate the world must be maintained."

Thirty-seven years after the event Yalta remains the key to the beginning of a new era in world affairs, an era in which the interests of the two superpowers have predominated.

This division of the world is particularly salient in Germany, where the impenetrable border built by the East runs right through the country, cutting the German people into two.

The resolutions approved at Yalta nonetheless make no reference to a division of Europe. Three months before the capitulation of the Reich and the end of the Second World War, America, Britain and Russia, the victorious Allies, merely agreed on how Germany was to be jointly occupied and administered.

The liberated nations of Europe were expressly assured of the right to choose the form of government under which they want to live.

US diplomat Averell Harriman, who took part at Yalta as an adviser to President Roosevelt, later said that this right to a free choice of form of government had been extended to the countries of Eastern Europe too.

This had been accepted by Stalin and there had been no agreement on spheres of influence in Europe.

Yet Europe was in effect divided at Yalta, and several historic dates testify to the policy of respective interests arising from the division.

In 1948 the Soviet Union sought to starve into submission the Western sectors of Berlin, which lay in the middle of its zone of occupation.

The West supplied West Berlin with food and other goods by an airlift. Moscow abandoned the blockade.

In 1953 the Soviet Union used military force to crush a workers' uprising in East Berlin that had included free elections among its demands. The United States did not intervene.

In 1956 the Red Army crushed a popular uprising in Hungary that was aimed at the Communist regime. Again the United States respected the Soviet move.

In 1961 the GDR built the Wall separating East and West Berlin. The United States protested, yet accepted the brutal division of the former German capital into separate halves.

In 1968 Warsaw Pact forces invaded Czechoslovakia to unseat the reform Communist Dubcek government. There was shock and outrage in the West, but no counter-moves were undertaken.

After the army take-over in Poland political commentators in various countries wondered whether the United States would now depart from its established policy of respecting the Soviet sphere of influence in Europe.

The economic sanctions imposed on Poland and the Soviet Union by President Reagan might seem to indicate that could possibly be the case.

A statement by Zbigniew Brzezinski, US national security adviser under the Carter administration, is worth noting.

He said the United States must think in terms of publicly revoking the terms of the Yalta Agreement if the Soviet Union were to actively intervene in Poland and not show readiness to be more reasonable.

Russia could not expected to be allowed to keep East and central Europe under its thumb today in the way it had been able to do immediately after the Second World War.

America's allies in Western Europe view with mixed feelings any attempt to depart from the terms of the Yalta Agreement.

There cannot be a government in Western Europe that would not like to end the division of the continent but, as many politicians have said, peace in Europe, which has lasted 37 years, must not be jeopardised in the process.

Siegfried Niebuhr/dpa

(Kieler Nachrichten, 7 January 1982)

■ ENERGY

Belgium, Germany join forces in burning coal underground to produce gas

Ahrenshöft, a new gas field near Husum, may yield only 350 cubic metres of natural gas a day, not be registered with the mining authorities and produce gas from a depth of 15 metres at most.

But it is likely to gain acclaim as a pioneering achievement in European energy development once more people come to hear of its existence.

It yields gas from a garbage tip, biogas commercially exploited for the first time ever.

Combustible gas is known to be generated inside large rubbish dumps when the garbage is piled high enough, the lower layers are condensed and anaerobic bacteria set to work on the process of decomposition.

This they can only do when the garbage is effectively sealed off from the air. Anaerobic bacteria are bacteria that can live without an oxygen supply.

This combustible gas largely consists of methane, the simplest hydrocarbon in molecular structure.

It occurs everywhere in the life-cycle as a product of decomposition and is nowadays regarded as a valuable energy raw material.

In bogs it occurs as marsh gas, which can catch fire, creating the phenomenon known as will-o'-the-wisp or jack-o'-lantern.

Down mines it occurs as fire-damp, the spontaneous combustion of which has often been the cause of pit disasters.

DIE WELT

It can also occur as natural gas in gas fields.

Its existence has been noted by refuse disposal operators all over the world and Bonn government research grants have been made to garbage biogas projects in Pforzheim and Brunswick.

But progress would not have gone beyond the experimental stage anywhere near as fast as it has done had not the garbage tip at Husum on the North Sea coast of Schleswig-Holstein run into environmental trouble a few years ago.

North Frisia, the local authority, covers a large area and decided a decade ago to set up a central garbage disposal facility.

A private company set up the dump on dry sandy soil in an abandoned gravel pit at Ahrenshöft, near Husum. It was designed to take the household garbage of up to 100,000 people over a range of 30 miles and more in any direction.

Garbage was rolled flat in the five- to six-metre deep put and all went well for five years or so as the mountain of garbage steadily grew.

Sanitary landfill would one day take it to a height of 50 metres, making it the highest elevation in the and a sightseeing attraction provided it was properly tended.

But about three years ago the mountain began to emit a most unpleasant smell. It was the smell of sulphur contained in gas released by microbic decomposition.

Vegetation in the vicinity began to suffer too. Windbreak plantations and the plants in farmers' fields wilted and died.

Gas was again the mischief-maker. The garbage was piled up so densely that gas travelled through the gravel and under the humus to surrounding fields, where it struck at the roots of vegetation.

The company operating the dump first tried to solve the problem by laying drains right round the garbage. They were porous and absorbed the gas, which was burnt.

It was burnt in the way that surplus gas is burnt at oil wells all over the world, and that was the end of the environmental trouble.

But the management was far from happy about gas, a valuable commodity, simply being burnt and put to no further use.

Measurements showed that the dump produced between 300 and 400 cubic metres of biogas a day and that the gas was between 48 and 52 per cent methane.

This is a quality the oil industry is far from loath to put to good use. So the dump had its own gas field. All that was needed was to tap it.

Apart from a very small subsidy from Schleswig-Holstein no public funds were available for another experiment of this kind.

The management were convinced nonetheless that their gas could be exploited commercially, so they decided to go ahead and set up the first commercial biogas field in Central Europe.

About 300 metres of horizontal gas catchment pipes were laid at a depth of roughly four metres and 10 iron pipes were rammed vertically into the ground.

Holes had been drilled in these pipes for gas intake; they were laid to tap gas from the centre of the garbage dump.

The gas intake is regulated by ventilators. The greater the suction the more air is introduced into the dump; this slows down the methane-producing bacteria, which do not take kindly to atmospheric oxygen.

The less the suction the richer the methane mixture, which is burnt directly in six motors that generate between 500 and 600 kilowatts.

The gas output is equal to about 180 to 200 litres of oil an hour.

To use the process heat the heat of the gas engines is harnessed to heat 3,200 square metres, or just under an acre, of greenhouses.

In them, alongside the garbage dump, rubber plants, gloxinias, Usambara violets and other decorative plants that love hot weather are grown for the Hamburg market.

The investment cost DM3.5m in all. This is not much when it is borne in mind that an experimental wind power scheme 100km further south on the North Sea coast will cost more than 20 times as much again yet generate only twice as much power.

So garbage gas looks like it has a commercial future.

Harald Steinert

(Die Welt, 2 January 1982)

Environmental trouble gave tip-off at garbage dump

Belgium and Germany have joined forces to burn coal in the seam and generate gas. The project began with low-grade gas but is due to progress to a higher grade this year.

Coal has been gasified under ground for decades in the Soviet Union. Trials are in progress in the United States.

In Russia compressed air is sent into the seam via the one bore hole to keep the process going, while the gas is extracted via another bore hole 20 to 30 metres away.

Because the air input is limited, most of the coal is gasified and does not burn. To keep gasification under control a horizontal link has to be drilled between the two vertical shafts.

Trials in the United States, at Hanna, Hoe Creek and Princetown, are based on the same principle, but gasification is more difficult in seams that slant up to the surface.

They usually contain a great deal more humidity, and water evaporation uses up a crucial proportion of the heat generated by coal gasification. In other words, there is a high energy loss.

Water doomed a project in Djerada, Morocco, to failure in the early 50s. The seam gasified there was an extremely steep one and contained a high percentage of water.

Gasification was carried out at a depth of a mere 50 metres and the gas generated had a thermal capacity of only 1,450 kilojoules per cubic metre.

On average only 30 per cent of the heat generated by the gasified coal was harnessed, partly because the seam and adjacent formations were wet, partly because of rifts through which part of the gas and, no doubt, the compressed air escaped.

The experiment was soon abandoned, but it supplied interesting operational data used in projecting a Western European in-seam coal gasification scheme.

The data were used to work out better in theory the potential of an in-seam gas field under better operational conditions.

In theory, it was learnt, the same coalfield would have yielded gas with twice the heat output if the same technique had been used, but at a depth of 700 metres on dry coal sealed off from the surface.

If air had been pumped in at higher pressure the heat output of the gas generated would have been three times higher. The coal would have been 53-per-cent and 70-per-cent utilised respectively.

These theoretical calculations were used as a basis for the German-Belgian project at Thulin on the outskirts of the Borinage coalfield.

At Thulin there are entire seams that have never been tapped because there would have been technical difficulties in working them.

They are particularly well suited for in-seam gasification because the seams and adjacent rock formations are undisturbed and unlikely to leak to the surface.

Pierre Ledent from Liège, Belgium, deals with the problems and state of the project in an essay for *Glückauf-Forschungshefte*, a German mining research journal.

As head of the joint research project M. Ledent notes that mining low-lying coal deposits is an outmoded method of harnessing energy.

But this had not been realised 30 years ago on the eve of economic recovery in Western Europe, so gasification techniques were not further developed.

Now, in the wake of the oil crisis, gasification could be the answer, or at least an answer, to Europe's energy problems.

The first practical experiment was nonetheless being undertaken using 50s techniques developed in the Soviet Union in particular.

In-seam gasification was being carried out by burning the coal via bore holes, running a connecting link between the two bore holes for what was known as reverse combustion.

Initially there were to be extremely small gas fields, with the two bore holes being drilled close together.

The crucial difference between past and previous experiments and practice was that in Thulin seams were to be gasified at a depth of between 800 and 900 metres under ground.

At this depth the coal is dry and the rock formations above the seam are so dense that much higher air pressure can be used to achieve better results.

Gasification at greater depths admittedly makes drilling the bore holes much more expensive, especially as they have to be accurately targeted.

Once the seam is burnt out it is expected to be slowly filled from above as the rock formations overhead subside, which could lead to subsidence, the problem that has ruled out conventional mining in this area in the past.

But the seam for gasification will, on the other hand, remain sealed and there should be no leakage.

If this is to be ensured the rock formations above the seam will have to subside flexibly and not abruptly, M. Ledent adds.

Yet another environmental hazard bedevils the project. During gasification the seam could release to the surface small quantities of carbon monoxide.

So trials have to be limited to seams that lie beneath land that is uninhabited.

It remains to be seen how serious this particular environmental hazard will be. The risk may not be very serious if past experience is any guide.

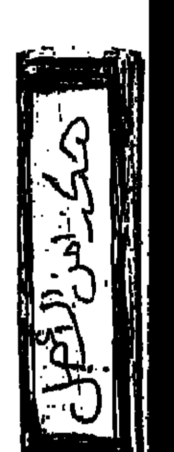
Past experience with burning coal seams includes the burning mountain, as it is known, at Dudweiler in the Saar, which has been burning for centuries.

In the next stage of the project the gas fields are to be enlarged by drilling bore holes further apart (between 50 and 70 metres).

Oxygen and steam will also be pumped down instead of air to eliminate the strain imposed by the 80 per cent of nitrogen in the air.

Jens Petersen

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 2 January 1982)



■ THE FISHING INDUSTRY

Government pollution survey holds out hope for the North Sea

The mud flats off the North Sea coast of Schleswig-Holstein are less polluted than has lately been assumed, a scientific survey reveals.

But this does not mean, says Günter Flessner, the state's Agriculture Minister (he commissioned the survey), the North Sea is in no ecological danger.

The survey was carried out by GKSS, a government maritime research agency in Geesthacht, near Hamburg.

Its findings come in the wake of reports last September that oxygen was low further out to sea, while a year ago experts published a North Sea survey indicating a serious risk of more widespread pollution of the marine environment.

The latest findings must not be taken to mean that Greenpeace volunteers are needlessly campaigning against the pumping of chemical effluent into the North Sea.

Despite encouraging findings Herr Flessner, whose portfolio includes environmental affairs, says there is no need to call off the alarm and sound the all-clear:

"We now know in greater detail what the position is just off the coast. For the first time ever we have definite facts on which to go.

"But we must take all risks into account, such as the risk of pollution from oilfields. Schleswig-Holstein is still convinced that the pumping of toxic chemical waste into the North Sea should be stopped."

Once the sea is too heavily polluted fish and other seafoods may no longer be caught or eaten.

In the past nothing has been known in detail about the extent of marine pollution just off the coast. So Schleswig-Holstein decided to commission a report.

The Geesthacht scientists were commissioned to check pollution in the mud flat waters off the North Sea coast.

For the scientific staff at GKSS this was a major step in the direction of diversification from the area in which they used to specialise.

Their main concern used to be with nuclear shipping and shipbuilding, including research and development of power reactors for ships.

But there is not much left to do in this sector. Research continues, especially into reactor safety, but the *Otto Hahn*, Germany's first and so far only nuclear freighter, has been scrapped.

It successfully shipped ore for many years but so far a shipping company has yet to be found to operate a successor to it.

So the Geesthacht scientists have had to look around for other research tasks to avoid being left out on a limb with no other prospect than redundancy.

GKSS has a payroll of about 700 and an annual budget of DM90m, but other work had to be found because the government could not be expected to keep on paying for ever when the original task was growing less and less important.

The government in this case means Bonn, which has a 90-per-cent holding in the agency, and the four coastal *Länder*, Hamburg, Bremen, Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony, which share the remaining 10 per cent.

Nuclear power for shipping is still a research brief but increasing importance is attached to a wide range of maritime research.

It includes environmental research, desalination, marine resources, deep-sea engineering and off-shore structures. For the past six years 10 per cent of research work has been devoted to environmental projects.

GKSS Press officer Hans F. Christiansen says it is time to forget what the initials stand for. The full name is no longer mentioned in brochures and the annual report.

It isr Gesellschaft für Kernenergieverwertung in Schiffbau und Schiffahrt, or Society for the Utilisation of Atomic Energy in Shipping and Shipbuilding.

The mud flat research contract was placed by the Kiel Agriculture Ministry in November 1980. It cost a little less than DM200,000 in all, of which Geesthacht paid part.

On publication of their findings the Geesthacht scientists sounded a most optimistic note. They were at pains to note that their measurements registered a very low toxin content in the waters of the mud flats.

Professor Walfried Michaelis, a physicist, neatly said: "You can certainly still eat mussels from the mud flats without any qualms."

Are conditions on the North Sea shore so much better than on the badly polluted beaches of the Mediterranean? The Geesthacht scientists dismiss this question as too speculative.

They are not prepared to comment; they agree with the view taken by Herr Flessner. He commissioned the survey to find out more about the facts of pollution.

They merely supplied data for an answer that amounted to: "We now know that for the time being there is no cause for alarm."

This was as far as the Minister was prepared to go, and it could be taken to mean that the Geesthacht scientists had not given the North Sea a clean bill of health and certainly not a go-ahead for polution.

This was clearly apparent from the finer points of the findings. Man-made toxins, especially chemicals, are very much in evidence in coastal waters and in the creatures that live in them, such as mussels.

But their levels are still well below the danger point as currently rated. A number of trace elements were identified in the water, the sediment and the mussels probed.

They included chromium, nickel, copper, zinc, arsenic, cadmium, mercury and lead. There were also a number of organic halogens.

They included pentachlorphenol, polychlorinated biphenyls, hexachlorbenzol, DDT, Aldrin and Dieldrin. They are used as insecticides, in wood conservation and as softening agents.

The report says:

"Borderline concentrations of organohalogens that are measurably toxic in their effect on marine organisms are four tenths lower than in current measurements further out to sea.

"The levels recorded in the mud flats were at the most 20 per cent higher than out at sea and at least 100 times lower than the danger level."

Yet these few details show that effluent dumping is not alone to blame; widespread industrial and agricultural chemicals are also found in the mud flats.

They have been identified even though they occur in a concentration that cannot yet be classified as dangerous. But levels are sure to increase.

Noth Sea mud flat mussels can still be eaten now, but in 10 or 20 years time they may well no longer be edible.

"A constant check on further developments must be urgently recommended," the survey says.

This is the only way to ensure the alarm is sounded in good time when one of these days, a halt must be called to further pollution.

The conclusion reached is:

"Long-term observation at selected spots would seem advisable to check seasonal variations and changes over long periods.

"The repercussions of environmental measures might then also be monitored. Mention might be made in this context of the ban on DDT, the mandatory reduction in the lead count in motor fuel and an end to pumping sewage sludge into the North Sea."

Wolfgang Rieger

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 28 December 1981)

Herring return to a burst of applause

Herrings, a spokesman for the fishing industry said just before Christmas, were in ample supply. Prices were steady and tending, if anything, to fall.

A few years ago the herring was said to have been fished to extinction in European waters and was certainly so scarce as to be a luxury.

Available or not, the erstwhile humble herring remains the Germans' favourite fish.

After three lean years due mainly to a ban on catching herrings in the North Sea and a number of other grounds, prospects have looked up for the herring-lover since last autumn.

In the southern North Sea the go-ahead was given for a catch of 20,000 tons, while the quota west of Britain was 65,000 tons.

In both cases the German fishing fleet was allocated a percentage share of the catch. But it is still too early to be jubilant.

Professor Albrecht Schumacher of the Federal Fishery Research Institute, Hamburg, says we are far from back to old times when the fishing fleets of Europe could join forces in going all out for the herring.

"We are still a long way off any such state of affairs," he says. "The North Sea herring catch used to be between 600,000 and 700,000 tons. It remains to be seen whether those days will ever return."

Should we even want them to return? The undisputed cause of the vanishing herring was overfishing, first of the Arctic, then, when it was cleaned out, of the North Sea.

In Arctic waters the Scandinavians used to do most of the herring fishing. The Arctic yielded up to one and a half million tons a year.

Advanced technology enabled fleets to pinpoint herring shoals so accurately that the fish stood no chance whatever.

Advance and vertical sounding for shoals was increasingly perfected, as were nets that virtually vacuum-cleaned entire seas. Then there was radar and trawlers equipped with more powerful engines.

Not only fully-grown herrings but also their young were netted. In some cases even spawn on the seabed was destroyed.

The first warnings were sounded in the early 60s. In the early 70s the first steps were taken to prevent extermination of the herring.

Fishing for herrings was banned in certain months in the North Sea. Quotas were laid down off the eastern seaboard of America.

Catches in the Irish Sea were limited too, and certain fishing methods were prohibited. Yet in Arctic waters herring fishing came to a virtual standstill because there were none left.

When annual catches in the North Sea declined to less than 200,000 tons a total ban was imposed. Some said it was in the nick of time; others said it was already too late.

No-one would venture to say whether, where and how the virtually extinct herring would even recover in this part of the world.

It was clear that there would only be any hope if the ban, first imposed in the North Sea in 1977, was strictly obeyed.

The herring as such stood a fair chance of making a comeback. It takes only three or four years to reach maturity, although some take seven or nine years to do so.

Herrings that spawn in winter and spring lay between 20,000 and 40,000 eggs. In summer and autumn they can lay as many as 70,000.

So the initial results of the ban are already apparent, and they differ from one sector of the North Sea to the next.

In the south they are back again in force, which prompted the French, Belgians and Dutch to land prohibited catches last year.

In the central and northern North Sea the herring situation is still something of a headache. The experts are all wondering why.

The explanation is probably the permitted fishing of young herring in the Skagerrak has taken its toll. Some fishermen will have landed a fair number of herrings too.

Both fishery research scientists and deep-sea fishermen blandly agree that common sense prevailed when the herring ban was imposed.

This begs the question. Did it prevail in time everywhere? Will it continue to do so and has the lesson been learnt? We shall see.

It certainly has been worthwhile in the southern sector, to the west of Britain and off Iceland.

Off Iceland a fishing ban was imposed about three years ago. Quotas have since been steadily increased to the point at which herring fishing has almost reached pre-ban levels.

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 23 December 1981)

■ THE ARTS

Pechstein, Expressionist with wide appeal

Max Pechstein, born on New Year's Eve 1881, was the same age as Picasso. Matisse was over 10 years older, Kirchner one year younger and Beckmann several years younger.

How strange it feels to be reminded that the moderns among 20th century painters are fast lining up for centenaries. Fresh, bold and exciting though their plans for a new world and a new view of art still, at times, seem, the artists of renewal have long assumed historic proportions.

Pechstein was one of them, less dominant than the others, perhaps, but as a major Expressionist significant enough to stand out from the *Brücke* group who were his friends.

He was born in Eckersbach, near Zwickau, in Saxony and served an apprenticeship as a decorator. He went to Dresden and studied at the college of arts and crafts.

There he met Erich Heckel and teamed up with the *Brücke* group, who strongly influenced his work in the early years of the century.

Between 1906 and 1910 he was given sufficient stimulus to develop his own, expressive style so rich in colour and harmony.

This desire for harmony and a beauty based on natural impressions was to play a major and by no means uncomplicated part in the assessment of his oeuvre.

Pechstein was long considered the leading painter of the Expressionst movement, first in Dresden, then, from 1908, in Berlin.

His work now creates a less provocative impression, his forms are less hard and less fractured and his colours seem less sharply contrasted than those of his friends Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Erich Heckel and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff.

His painting exuded the sensual attraction of objects and landscapes and largely lacked the tempests of emotion and the flames of pathos typical of his friends.

Pechstein was the first of them to exhibit his paintings, at the Berlin Secession, for instance, where in 1909 he even sold one.

At about this time he and his friends headed for the countryside, such as the Moritzburg lakes near Dresden, Dangast, a North Sea village near Wilhelmshaven, and Nidden on the East Prussian coast (Pechstein's haunt).

Paintings, water colours, drawings and prints reflect the summer happiness of the period, the feeling of heading for fresh pastures and the need to feel at one with nature.

It was a deeply felt need to be attuned to the natural characteristics of people who could feel free in unspoilt countryside.

Pechstein loved these stays in the country. He travelled to his Baltic resort until the 30s and survived the Second World War on the Baltic coast.

But he soon sought to establish contact with an outside world that other members of the *Brücke* did not, at first, take notice of.

He travelled to Rome and Paris, went into early Italian painting and in Munich came across Marc, Macke and Kandinsky.

He shared with other Expressionists a love of the unspoilt art of primitive peoples, but he and Nolde alone were not content to make do with what they saw in ethnological museums.

Just before the outbreak of the First World War Pechstein travelled to the Palau islands in the south-west Pacific in a quest for sources of unspoilt life.

He was interned by the Japanese, returned to Germany via America, served as a soldier and tried to start anew after the war in Berlin.

His fresh start led for a while to the November revolutionaries. He was the member of the Workers' Council responsible for art.

He soon withdrew from the late Expressionist pathos of younger artists and stuck throughout the 20s to his own expressive, vital style of painting.

In 1934 he was classified as a degenerate by the Nazis and forbidden to paint — a ban that was lifted in 1939.

After the Second World War he helped re-establish the Berlin Academy, took up a teaching post at the new College of Art and died, in Berlin, in 1955.

Much of his work was destroyed during the Third Reich and in the war years, and this is one reason why there has never been a major post-war retrospective. Whenever his name was mentioned, reference was made to his decorative skills, his painterly abundance and quality of movement. He was said to have once been the best-known Expressionist of the *Brücke* period and also the most pleasing of Expressionist painters, the one closest to the taste of a wider public. One of the few places where a wider range of his drawings, etchings, woodcuts and prints, especially dating back to his earlier days, can currently be seen is Wolfgang Werner's Graphisches Kabinett in Bremen.

Pechstein's 'Self portrait in Studio' (1922).
(Photo: Catalogue)

After a longer period spent painting, he wrote in 1921, he felt a desire for the colourful nature of black in graphic art. This powerful and intensive colour can clearly be seen in Bremen.

Ursula Bode

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 31 December 1981)

Soutine makes posthumous German debut

Chaim Soutine, 1893-1943, is a painter virtually unknown in Germany. Only three of his canvases are on exhibit in German museums: in Berlin, Stuttgart and Karlsruhe.

Yet his glaring colour rhythm and pulsating work is by no means an oeuvre that took shape in the byways of modern art or vanished quietly into art history.

Well-known in the United States, Japan, France and Holland, Soutine's work has now been given its first German exhibition at the *Westphalian Landesmuseum* in Münster.

That this exhibition is his first in Germany comes as much of a surprise as does one's first encounter with his extraordinarily aggressive pictorial world, which has similarities with German Expressionism.

Nearly 40 years after the painter's death in Paris, Ernst-Gerhard Güse has spent a year and a half putting together a retrospective consisting of over 90 works. Taking in all Soutine's topics and stages of development, it enables the visitor to flesh out a sketchy acquaintanceship.

The arrangement of works on loan from all over the world is easy to follow and opens up, after an initial visual shock, access to an oeuvre inextricably linked with Soutine's life.

He was born in Smilovitchi, near Minsk, the tenth of 11 children of a poor Jewish tailor. In Minsk he took his first lessons in painting and it was there that he made the acquaintance of the artist Krémègne.

In 1912 he followed him to Paris, much as Chagall had already done. There, like Léger and Archipenko he lived in La Ruche, a studio house, and made friends with Modigliani, who did much for him.

He was initially dogged by bitter poverty, as he had been back home in Russia, until Dr Barnes, an American collector, bought 100 of his paintings.

It may not have been exactly 100. The number is an estimate, and views differ of this and other points, such as when he was born and when to date much of



Soutine's 'Naked Lady' (1933).
(Photo: Dieter Burkamp)

his work. On this score there has been much controversy among the experts, but all agree on his standing as a painter.

The crux of his work, and of the Münster exhibition, are the landscapes he painted at Céret in the Pyrenees. They are unparalleled in their tempestuousness.

An impassioned brush assembles eruptions of colour on the canvas that waylay the viewer and captivate him once he has submitted to the suggestive rhythm.

After 1923, when he changed his style, Soutine tried to get hold of his Céret paintings and destroy them.

Death and destruction, especially the process of dying and decomposition, are reflected in another group, his still lifes. They were always put together in detail in the studio and celebrated to a manic degree, as it were, such as when trying to portray an ox carcass along Rembrandt lines.

Time and again blood was poured over the stinking carcass to keep the red of the meat alive. This and similar examples of dead nature do indeed seem alive, although their intensity of colour has little in common with the falsifying glare of colour on the exhibition poster and catalogue cover.

Apart from this point, the catalogue, which is the first publication in German on the painter, provides a careful and comprehensive briefing on Soutine's life and work.

It fills a gap that in retrospect can be seen to have been a substantial one.

Although in his later Cagnes landscapes and his portraits Soutine acknowledges a formal principle of order, what his paintings have to say retains its emotional force.

More importance is attached to the subject matter than in his earlier, Céret days when trees, houses, valleys and mountains merely served the interest of autonomous colour.

Soutine consciously overrode the orthodox Jewish ban on painting in terms of false imagery, expressing this in specific topics.

He also acknowledged his indebtedness to Rembrandt, Carot, van Gogh and Cézanne. He cannot now be conveniently pigeonholed in art history.

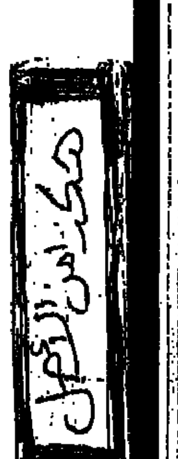
His pictorial attacks on the viewer are not aimed to please and not easy meat, but some contemporary artists claim his as a precursor, so his prospects look good.

This is why the entrance hall of the Münster museum features a selection of works by the nouveau fauve movement. It is aimed at showing what they have in common.

Yet in the context of the exhibition devoted to Soutine it seems a little out of place, just as does the red of the ox carcass.

Gisela Burkamp

(Der Tagesspiegel, 18 December 1981)



■ THE CINEMA

Marlene Dietrich, at 80, forever the goddess with the voice and the legs

Most of us remember THE Marlene Dietrich pose... sitting in short dancing skirt, leg bent, top hat at a rakish angle.

There is the song that goes with that image, *Ich bin von Kopf bis Fuss auf Liebe eingestellt*.

Dietrich of the lovely legs is now 80. She lives in Paris.

It was once said that the success of *Blue Angel* lay in her legs. Indeed, Emil Jannings, as Professor Unrat, was powerless against such massive sex appeal.

Blue Angel, first screened in Berlin's *Gloriapalast* on April 1930, made her into a goddess of the screen.

Soon after, her discoverer and director, Joseph von Sternberg, took her to Hollywood.

Going on a crash diet, she managed to get rid of much of her puppy fat and Sternberg used clever lighting effects to get the best out of her face: the cheekbones and the grey-green veiled eyes under the thin, high-drawn eyebrows.

He clad her in veils, fur boas and daring hats, turning her into the vamp of vamps. But he also made full use of her courage, her intelligence and her irony.

Trouser suits worn with cheek and charm

She wore her trouser suits with cheek and charm that lent her such a boyishness that even women were enchanted.

The inscrutibility of this woman was such as to soon outstrip the appeal of the purer and more innocent beauty of Greta Garbo, until then the Queen of Hollywood.

The two had nothing in common except stardom.

In *Morocco* (1931), her first American film, Marlene played opposite Gary Cooper as an entertainer in a nightclub on the edge of the desert.

She passes the foreign legionnaire Cooper the key to her room hidden in a bunch of violets.

Towards the end, as he moves off with his battalion, she rids herself of her high-heeled shoes.

Barefooted, wearing a white gossamer dress, she follows him into the uncertainties of the desert. That was a novelty in those days — a vamp full of manly courage.

After her five years with Sternberg, she had learned everything there was to learn about lights, cameras and cutting, and therefore about her own effectiveness. She began working under other directors.

She tried her hand at Westerns, playing the daring saloon girl.

Under Ernst Lubitsch, her ironic approach became Mephistophelian. Yet she remained an entirely feminine angel caught between two men as in *Angel* (1937).

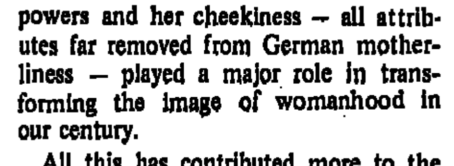
The true quality of this film was not recognised until decades later.

But there were also mediocre films in this post-Sternberg era in which she was overwhelmed by veils, frills and boas.

She became an American citizen in 1939, and for three years entertained American troops as an actress and singer.

In France, she ventured very close to





the front lines, swinging her famous legs to the cheers of the GIs.

Did she sing for Germany's enemies? No. She sang and played for the longed-for peace.

The daughter of a Prussian officer, she knew that peace and justice belong together and was awarded the cross of the French Legion of Honour.

After the war, she went back to the movies, making the famous *Witness for the Prosecution* under Billy Wilder in 1957.

But she also began a new career as a *diseuse*. Wearing skin-tight dresses of silver or gold lamé, with a delivery somewhere between speech and song, the great performer — by now over 50 — excelled with a voice that had lost the somewhat tinny or glasslike brightness that stamped Lola and that had also been a trait of the young Lotte Lenya.

Now, the voice had a darker timbre with gentle nuances that only Europeans could fully understand.

Having started in Las Vegas, Dietrich won herself standing ovations in London, Moscow, Warsaw, Paris and Stockholm.

She returned to Germany in 1962, and to a cool reception. But she did not let that embitter her.

She never shed her love of Germany in general and Berlin in particular.

In the 1970s, she wrote her memoirs, a tough job which she pursued doggedly, as was her style.

In 1979, she made yet another film, this time under David Hemmings. But by then she was only a marble monument to herself.

Living in Paris, she has grown tired of legends, but remains one.

Has she become a legend through her roles only? This is both right and wrong, for her roles and her presentation were simply the images of the person — a person whose erotic attraction never failed to fascinate.

Her detached aloofness, her seductive powers and her cheekiness — all attributes far removed from German motherliness — played a major role in transforming the image of womanhood in our century.

All this has contributed more to the emancipation of women than all the essays written on the subject put together.

A new type of woman arose. No longer the masculine woman but a female who — even in male clothing — remained a superior and many-faceted womanly being. This was so regardless whether she played a saloon entertainer or a grande dame.

This mixture of girl and lady which so many still try to imitate today was unique. As a result, the type created by Marlene Dietrich is far from worn.

The fact that she is mostly referred to be her first name is a sign of uniqueness. After all, the French also called Chaplin, whom they considered one of their own, "Charlot".

Her aggressive beauty (reddish blonde hair, height 164cm and a waist of 60 cm when she arrived in the USA in 1930) was not only accounted for by the immaculate figure but also by how she moved. There was something electrifying about her.

She had an unerring instinct for the right cut and colour in her costumes. Perhaps an artificial figure, she was fortunately full of soul of spirit.

The screen did not make her two-dimensional because her decisions both in life and in her many films were always spontaneous and individualistic.

She was a staunch and reliable friend to her husband of 50 years, the producer Rudolf Sieber whom she married in 1926 and who died in 1976. It was she who brought him from Berlin to Hollywood.

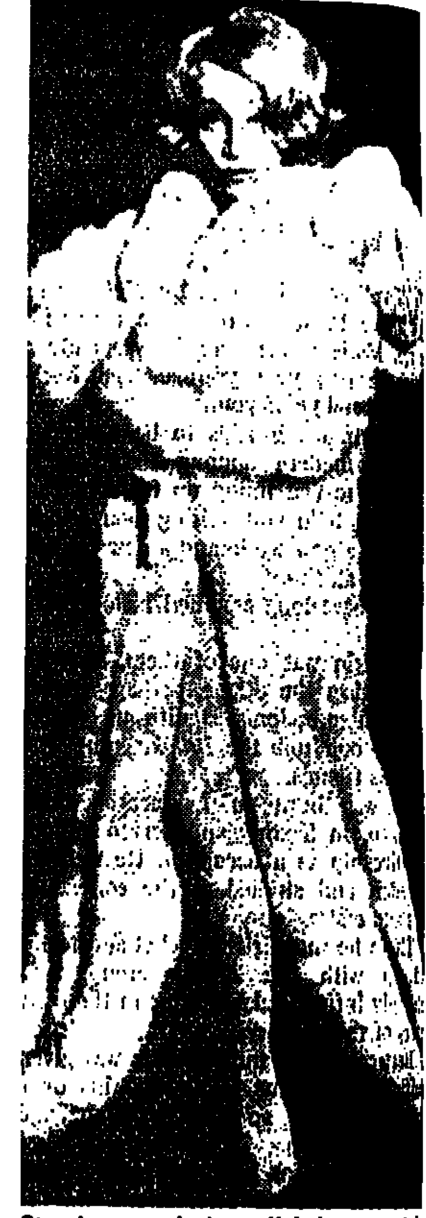
For her daughter Maria there was the constant love of a mother.

But, as she writes in her memoirs, she was in love with Jean Gabin whom she spoiled and cosseted. Yet he refused to live with her.

Hemingway praised above all her sense of fair play. And Jean Cocteau once wrote about her: "If Marlene Dietrich were to perform a striptease and if,



The Dietrich pose in 'Blue Angel' (1930). (Photos dpa)



Sternberg used clever lighting to get the best out of her face. (Photo: [illegible])

true to herself, she were to go the whole hog and drop the last stitch of clothing, the very substance of her person would still be preserved: a heart of gold."

She has always helped unstintingly: he lent a helping hand to Hildegard Knef when she was a stranger in New York and Hollywood.

And when Jean Renoir found it hard to come to terms with life in the American West, she cooked him his favourite French dishes.

When her friends were ill she cleaned their homes, changed the bed linen and cooked for them. This is when she came up to scratch as a true German *hausfrau*.

Said Billy Wilder: "There are some people who constantly come to her for help. To discuss problems with her is better than seeing a psychiatrist. Yet nobody asks her now she herself is doing."

Dietrich hated Hitler and refused to make movies under Goebbels.

She rode with de Gaulle down the Champs Elysée in the victory parade at war's end; and she also gave the world the unforgettable song *Sag mir, wo die Blumen sind... Über Gräben weht der Wind* (Where have all the flowers gone?)

The melancholy of this totally unsentimental song applies to all soldiers everywhere.

Actresses who today play Marlene Dietrich roles (like Hanna Schygulla in *Lili Marleen*, Barbara Sukoya in *Lola*, Cathérine Deneuve in *Die letzte Metro*) need not only beauty, elegance and seductiveness, Dietrich's most obvious attributes; they also need loyalty and courage, without which all their acting is but ashes scattered by the wind.

Brigitte Jeremias

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 24 December 1981)

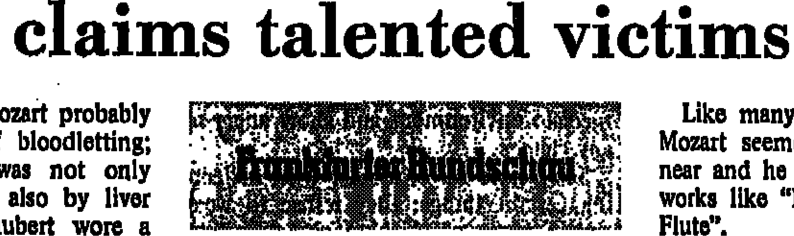
■ MEDICINE

Music reaches a crescendo as death claims talented victims

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart probably died as a result of bloodletting; Ludwig van Beethoven was not only troubled by deafness but also by liver problems; and Franz Schubert wore a toupee because a venereal disease made him bald.

The illnesses of the artists of the past are difficult to establish. Mostly, this can only be done by resorting to diary entries, letters and the reports of contemporaries.

Viennese music lover and medical



doctor Professor Anton Neumayr has delved into the ailments of the world's great musicians and presented the results of his research at the *Medica 81* congress in Düsseldorf.

Shortly after Mozart's death, there were widespread rumours that he had "fallen prey to the Italians" and had been poisoned with mercury on orders from his rivalling Vienna court conductor Antonio Salieri.

Another version had it that he was done in by freemasons because his "Magic Flute" revealed certain lodge rituals.

Mathilde Ludendorff, the wife of the World War I general, spread the rumour that Mozart was done away with by the Jews.

Professor Neumayr disagrees with the lot. He analysed the clinical symptoms and found out that the prodigy Mozart had suffered from acute rheumatism since early childhood.

His father, Leopold, frequently referred to the affliction, writing: "Our Wolferl couldn't stand on either foot and he could move neither toes nor knees..."

Since the strenuous concert tours made it impossible to cure the rheumatism, Professor Neumayr (along with other doctors) suspects that a streptococcal infection ensued that affected the heart and the kidneys.

Even so, Professor Neumayr does not agree with the theory that Mozart was chronically ill.

Like many other musicians, however, Mozart seemed to feel that death was near and he expressed this in his great works like "Idomeneo" and the "Magic Flute".

By welcoming death, he overcame it. This was perfectly in keeping with Mozart's view of death as a benign friend, Professor Neumayr told the congress.

According to him, the composer suffered from an acute rheumatic fever that was regarded as a "social disease" at the time. (This attitude still prevails in some developing countries.)

Then, the condition was treated with frequent bloodletting, sometimes several cuppings a day were made of about a quarter of a litre.

"The world's greatest musical genius" died on 2 December 1791 at 1.00 a.m.

Ludwig van Beethoven saw death as a delivery from intolerable suffering. In his *Heiligenstedter Testament* he wrote: "I am joyously rushing to meet death halfway. Come whenever you like..."

Despite increasing deafness, Beethoven managed to retain his ability to perceive sound.

At first he rebelled against the affliction; but eventually he came to terms with it. Yet he once wrote: "What a humiliation to have somebody standing next to me and hearing the flute from a distance while I could hear nothing."

Towards the end, Beethoven was only able to communicate in writing.

It is generally assumed that his deafness was due to otosclerosis.

But his enormous, "titanic" head points to Paget's Disease — a diagnosis that seems to be supported by the autopsy.

Paget's Disease can impair hearing as early as the age of 20.

Professor Neumayr suspects that the composer also suffered from a toxic neuritis, in other words, damage to the hearing nerves in the inner ear. This usually follows an infection.

Neumayr rejects the frequently heard contention that Beethoven's deafness was due to syphilis. According to him both the clinical course of his ailment and the autopsy disprove this.

Beethoven also suffered from abdominal colics coupled with fever from an early age.

There has been much guessing about the cause of this ailment which could have had an effect on his fatal liver condition.

Some say that the intestinal problems were because of bacteria while others attribute them to a chronic inflammation of the pancreas.

In his later years, Beethoven suffered from diarrhoea and asthma which were aggravated by a painful conjunctivitis and jaundice.

But the actual cause of his death on 18 December 1826 was cirrhosis of the liver.

Neumayr is certain that Beethoven was no alcoholic; but on the other hand, he enjoyed his wine and drank it regularly.

Given an hereditary predisposition, a daily alcohol intake of 60 to 80 grammes (about a pint of wine) can lead to cirrhosis of the liver.

Franz Schubert, on the other hand, actually did get syphilis. Due to the resulting skin eruptions and the loss of his hair, he was embarrassed to leave the house. So he wore a toupee.

Professor Neumayr said Schubert died from gastric typhoid, which was then prevalent in Vienna.

Klaus Dallibor

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 28 December 1981)

A 'stone-age' therapy

A new approach to treating mental illness has been developed by a group in Frankfurt.

It has established what it calls a "stone age workshop" where patients can process such basic materials as stone, bone and clay using stone-age tools.

This helps to develop creative powers, overcome uncertainty and promote communication.

The theory is, that by taking the patient back to the very roots of mankind, he is taught to regard himself as a link in a very long chain.

This gives him the chance to "step out of his own ego" and come to terms with himself.

Developer of the technique is the *Frankfurter Workgemeinschaft*, a Christian citizens group founded in 1967.

The organisation's Philipp Neri Institute has been a pioneer of rehabilitation work for many years. Its aim is to promote the personality development of the patient by improving his attitude towards himself as well as towards his environment.

One method is to promote creativity and communication.

The objective is to use an era of man's history as a vehicle that will enable the patient to delve into his own roots and build up his personality from scratch.

Hence the stone-age arrangement.

What matters is to relive an early part of man's history in practical terms.

The group closely cooperates with leading scholars such as archaeologist Professor Hans Reinerth.

The stone-age workshop not only enables the patient to develop his own creative powers. It also teaches him to grasp, in the most literal sense, the texture of basic materials.

It helps him overcome uncertainties and inhibitions and promotes creativity and communication.

The Neri Institute is furnishing a stone age house on stilts. The house is modelled on structures Professor Reinerth found on the shores of Lake Constance.

Everything is as it was then and all the original materials are there for the participants to see and feel.

Practical stone age work varies widely in difficulty. It ranges from the milling of grain with primitive tools, bread baking and making candles from birch bark to the manufacture of horn and bone chisels, stone knives and saws or drills.

(Lübecker Nachrichten, 1 January 1982)

Thespian way to mental recovery

A Bavarian hospital uses theatre as a therapy to help alcoholics, drug addicts, schizophrenics and neurotics.

What began as an experiment is now so successful that the group tours and performs in public theatres.

This helps reduce public prejudice about psychiatric work.

It all started accidentally in the Bavarian town of Günzburg.

For years, a highlight of Christmas season was the dramatic production put on by girls from the local convent.

Four years ago, the school was moved.

Professor Ernst Lungershausen, director of the hospital, decided to try and fill the void with a cast of patients.

One of the doctors, Josef Schimek, explained the therapy by saying that alcoholics and drug addicts try and escape reality because of the fear of failure.

When a patient accepts a role in a play, he also accepts the risk of forgetting lines. By taking on the responsibility of learning them he actually rehearses reality — facing the uncertainties of daily life.

A typical patient is Matthias, who was admitted to a psychiatric ward after a suicide attempt.

His wife had left him, he had problems at work, and his friends had not helped him.

Matthias found that life could again become worthwhile.

He was cast in the role of Tom Defoe in *Robinson darf nicht sterben* (Robinson Must not Die) put on by the patients theatre.

Matthias says about Tom Defoe: "He's a vile character at first. Then he repents and tries to begin a new life, that is exactly my own situation.

Another member of the cast, an alcoholic said: "I enjoy acting so much that I'm determined to join an amateur group after I'm discharged."

But the whole experience for a drug addict was more dramatic: "Overcoming stage fright is the same as overcoming my fear of life."

Theatre director is music therapist and physical training teacher Steffi Badenheuer, who says: "We have concentrated from the very beginning on major full length plays.

"Der Lügner und die Nonne (The Liar and the Nun) by Curt Goetz and Shaw's *Heroes* have so far been the greatest successes."

Dr Schimek says a major element is the experience of community. A company of some 30 people becomes an interacting group.

The patients learn to get along with each other and to share success and failure.

Many roles mirror the actor's own life situation.

One patient, who had to be hospitalised because of drug addiction, sees it this way: "I have the good fortune to play in a comedy. This takes me back to my easy childhood when life was without problems. In playing the role, I once more experience happiness and contentment — something that was sorely lacking before."

When the company eventually went on tour, there was some resistance among theatre managers and town councils.

Steffi Badenheuer: "Whenever I had to negotiate with mayors I had a hard time convincing them that we were an amateur theatre group like any other."

The audiences were also sceptical. They naturally expected something unusual to happen — like a performer going round the bend on stage. "But this never happened," says Frau Badenheuer.

The Günzburg ensemble is like any other amateur group. Only the preparatory work is more difficult.

One of the main problems is to find a suitable cast. Some patients quickly find the task too much and need constant encouragement. And naturally the nerves grow as the opening night draws nearer.

The therapeutic success of the new approach is undisputed. In addition, the public recognition helps remove prejudices against psychiatric work as a whole. But what matters for the players is only the new experience of self-assurance.

Bernd Dassel

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 24 December 1981)

■ **CHILDREN**

Autism: still no way of breaking down this invisible wall of isolation

The cause of autism in children is still not known. No cure has been found.

According to Professor Hans-E. Kehrer, of Münster University, the best that can be hoped for is some social adjustment.

This is best achieved when diagnosis is early. But this is difficult because few symptoms emerge early.

Those symptoms that do show themselves are likely to resemble those of deafness, dumbness or mental deficiency. Autistic children can see, hear, feel, smell and taste, but they do not know what to do with these senses.

Initially they are unable to understand gestures such as smiling, stroking or talking.

The autistic child looks past or through the mother. It lives behind an invisible wall.

It barely plays with other children and has little contact with adults.

It does not know how to make "proper" use of a toy. Typically, it will keep turning an object round for hours, or take a piece of string and wave it around and back and forth.

Several years ago, a Dutch expert, Nobel Prize winner Nikolaas Tinbergen, said autism was a fear-dominated emotional imbalance as a result of influences before or after birth.

The imbalance prevented a normal child-parent relationship.



His findings led many parents to ask themselves whether their child's illness was their own fault.

They asked themselves where they had gone wrong.

Researchers then spoke of "refrigerator parents", referring to excessively intellectual parents who were said to lack the necessary warmth and to be unable to express love.

Tinbergen's theory gained credibility *when it turned out that children from* the so-called lower classes or less intellectual parents were less prone to autism. This only added to parents' guilt feelings.

It was not until the 1940s that the American child psychiatrist Leo Kanner and the Viennese paediatrician Hans Asperger first described the symptoms of autism.

But the observation about the conspicuously high proportion of intellectuals among the parents leaves much unclear.

Autistic speech shows characteristic peculiarities that can range from a total absence of articulate speech all the way to a well developed but abnormal way of expression.

The children insist on a particular order within the house and in the immediate environment and show anger at any change.

They have an obsession with collecting certain things: they refuse to wear certain types of clothing or eat certain foods.

Experts are now agreed that the autistic syndrome is among other things due to a disorder in the processing of certain sensory perceptions.

This processing depends on the correct functioning of certain sections of the brain, leading to the conclusion that autism is partly due to brain malfunctioning.

But it is still unknown what causes the changes and the malfunctioning.

However, brain damage — frequently due to lack of oxygen — can occur during or after birth or as a result of accident or inflammation.

It is still unknown whether damage to the perceptory functions can occur as a result of other than outside influences.

Today, most experts say that autism is not due to environmental influences, such as a disturbed mother-child relationship.

It has been established that most mothers of autistic children are perfectly normal.

Surveys show that affected families make no particular mistake in upbringing such as a lack of love and tenderness in the first years.

Mothers treat the infant exactly the same as brothers and sisters.

Naturally, parents don't know initially that there is anything wrong with the child.

The first realisation usually comes when the child fails to react to tenderness. This causes a feeling of resignation which then might prompt the mother to behave wrongly. This leads to a vicious circle because the mother's wrong behaviour caused by the child's autism in the first place tends to aggravate the condition.

In any event, specialists agree now that love alone is not enough to prevent the conditions.

What, if anything, can be done to help these children? There are an estimated 6,000 to 7,000 in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Some 3,000 have been diagnosed as autistic. The others have simply been classified as mentally disabled or retarded or simply "peculiar".

It is frequently impossible to draw a clear line because of the many variations in the symptoms of autism.

And since little is known about the causes it is impossible to eliminate them.

Every case of autism is different, so each patient should receive tailor-made therapy. There is also no one type of school suitable for autistic children.

The question is whether autistic children should receive individual tuition (and so be isolated still further) or whether they should be taught in small classes.

But this, too, would mean that they would be unable to understand what is happening around them, what is expected of them and why other children do what they do.

There is also the problem that doctors and parents frequently disagree on what is best.

Professor Kehrer describes the course of the disorder: the symptoms first show before the child is 30 months old. They reach their climax when the child is between five and eight. Autism cannot be completely cured but a certain degree of social adjustment can be achieved.

The prospects are best with early diagnosis. But this is not easy because autistic children tend to be particularly attractive. They look intelligent and their eyes at this stage show an expression of concentration. Parents are unaware that there is something wrong.

Autistic children move with particular grace and elegance and many are more clever than their normal counterparts at putting together jigsaw puzzles and similar games of skill.

It is almost impossible to detect an autistic child in infancy because there are few symptoms to distinguish it from normal babies. Other symptoms are very similar to those found in mentally deficient children or the deaf and dumb.

But *an experienced mother will* feel that there is something wrong when her three- to four-month-old baby fails to smile at a familiar face and when it takes tickling or similar physical action to make it show some pleasure.

Doctors say that many parents are delighted to have a baby that is particularly good and quiet and that is perfectly happy when left alone.

As a result, parents do not see a doctor until relatives notice that the child is late in starting to talk or generally slow in developing.

Frequently, both parents and paediatricians fail to recognise autistic symptoms as the stereotype moving of objects, a preference for unchanging visual patterns, frequent falling and total lack of curiosity, to mention but a few signs that commonly occur between 18 months and two years.

The earlier a case is diagnosed the better the analysis and the sooner can treatment begin.

It is also important to tell the parents early so they can learn to cope emotionally. They can learn not to blame themselves.

What are the prospects? Most will need special care for the rest of their lives, the experts say. But they also stress that autistic people are intellectually average or above average.

A case in point is a 7-year-old boy whose mathematical prowess is such that he can do calculations many children twice his age would be hard put to equal. But apart from mathematics he is only capable of unintelligible scribbling.

The same can be found among adult victims. They come up with starling performances in fields that require no linguistic ability.

Some are outstanding musicians while others are extremely clever mechanics.

Some have an almost photographic memory and are capable of storing information over a long period.

Autistic people can best be described as outsiders and extreme individualists.

In less severe cases, people can hold a normal job and look after themselves reasonably well. But employers should be flexible and should not demand that a young person who is capable of doing a specific job should be a high school graduate.

It is necessary to find "social niches" for these outsiders so that they do not have to remain on the periphery for the rest of their lives.

If this could be achieved, not only the sufferers but society as a whole would benefit.

Gisela Friedrichsen

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 23 December 1981)



■ **SOCIETY**

Touch Pen faces up to living in Germany

In this article, Hans D. Barbier, a member of the Süddeutsche Zeitung editorial staff, tells about his adopted son from Cambodia.

Touch Pen, the 14-year-old son of a Cambodian farmer, is not legally our child because his parents must still be considered missing and not dead.

But we look upon him as our son. For him and for us the legal position is irrelevant.

In the autumn of 1979 he was forced by injustice, famine and persecution to escape from the jungles of South-East Asia and ended up in Germany.

He has lived with us for a year and a half, during which he has become our son, both because we feel we are his parents and because he wants to be our son.

We are occasionally asked whether he has integrated. While we are not sure just what sociologists and refugee organisations mean by the term, we are convinced Touch himself feels he has found a new home with us.

We can see for ourselves that he gets on well with other children and his teachers tell us he gets on well at school. If that is integration, Touch is well on the way to settling in here in his new world.

But the way has not been easy, neither for him especially nor, at times, for us. We are occasionally asked whether we would take a foster-child from another *part of* the world again.

Not for a moment have we ever hesitated before answering that we would always take Touch again. Both for his sake and for our own we are happy events took the course they did.

We did not choose him ourselves. He was chosen for us as one of 107 Cambodian children who were flown out of Thailand in the late summer of 1979 by the German Red Cross.

When we got him he could write letters and numbers and do a little arithmetic, but he could read and speak virtually no German.

Only now there are, to all intents and purposes, no further difficulties in understanding each other can we imagine how isolated he must have felt in his new environment.

He was quick to learn, but it was a year before he overcame his shyness and began, at least with us at home, to put together a few bits and pieces of German and join in everyday conversation.

Now we barely notice he is not a German. The moment he managed to put his first few complete sentences together in German he exposed as a legend the cliché of the inscrutable Asian.

When he is in a good mood he can be fun and a great entertainer. The very next moment he can be deeply insulted for some altogether insignificant reason or other, But he is no less quick to be friends again.

Except for a very few moments there have never been times when we felt Touch might get out of control.

After his initial phase of total speechlessness he naturally reacted. He became difficult, and especially hard to handle for his foster-mother.

Yet in a childlike way he loves her dearly, and it is due largely to his relationship with my wife that he has settled down here in Bonn with us and feels at home.

It was with her first that he lost some of his initial shyness, to her that he spoke his first words and sentences in German.

He first tells her when he wants something particularly expensive, such as a rechargeable model veteran car or a remote-controlled model glider.

He goes to her first even though expenditure of this kind and in this department are more in his new father's line.

He calls us *Mama* and *Papa* of his own free will. We left it to him to decide whether he might not prefer to call *us by our first names.*

But he has always, continuously and consistently, been more trusting and confiding to my wife than to me. He respects me but loves his mother.

Adult Cambodians have assured us that has nothing to do with any special relationship he has with us; it is how any Khmer boy would feel towards his parents.

These mixed feelings came particularly to the fore when he began to rebel. After weeks of silence and behaviour as though he were a guest he clearly felt like rebelling.

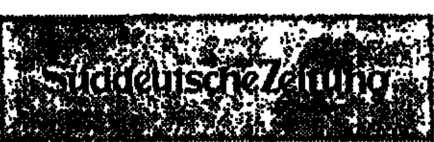
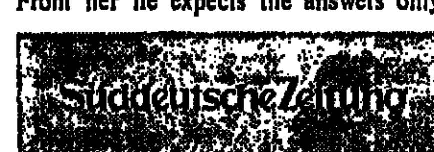
It was, we imagine, less a rebellion against us than against the difficulties created by his situation.

He was out to create difficulties, be it over the choice of clothing suitable for the weather, over homework or over when he ought to go to bed.

To worry and upset his foster-mother he ran over the track at the railway station, ignored red lights at crossings and cycled the wrong way down one-way streets.

But most of these symptoms have been cured now Touch, who is our only son, feels sure we love him without having to test us in ways such as these.

Some persist, such as his refusal to allow my wife to teach him anything. From her he expects the answers only.

From me he is prepared to pay attention to explanations.

With me he is also willing to do exercises that do not form part of his school homework.

We were long at a loss what kind of school to send him to, but he was lovingly and successfully cared for in his first year at school in Germany.

He spent it in the fourth and final class of elementary school, with German children a year or two younger, but it was almost impossible to gain a clear idea how gifted he was.

Before long it was clear even so that he had a good eye for combinations and was quick to grasp technical sequences. Vector diagrams were no trouble; it was as if he had grown up with them and not among water buffaloes.

It took him only a few weeks to outgrow the plans of his electric railway, and after six months' chess, practising daily, he is more than a match for his father (not that I claim to be a good player).

He can play well enough to beat opponents who are not expecting him to be a serious challenge, but in formal tests, even non-verbal ones, he has not done well.



Touch Pen at home with his new family.

(Photo: Hans D. Barbier)

The tests were not to blame, but neither was he. A Cambodian boy who was separated from his parents at the age of eight and then put to work, hard and unremittingly, until he succeeded in escaping cannot be expected to handle a Western intelligence test.

He is not cut out to answer a Western-style paper in a set period of time, but although he is still not too good at fluent conversation his approach to learning is that of a dialogue.

He has to feel he is finding the solution to a problem in consultation and conversation. In tests selected with this approach in mind he soon proved to be a fast learner.

But it remained to be seen (and still does) how far his talent goes in terms of German school-leaving qualifications.

So for this and other reasons we decided to send him to comprehensive school after he completed primary school, and the first few months have not proved us wrong.

He has no idea that the comprehensive school claims to be ideally suited for youngsters like him, children whose aptitudes are not yet clear.

He doesn't know that it is the only category of secondary school that enables students to change course during their school career because it does not in itself represent an irrevocable decision.

But we will see, regardless of ideological disputes over the comprehensive school, whether it will suit him and how it will be able to help him.

As soon as he learnt German he began to tell us what life had been like in Cambodia, such as when his mother cured him using herbal extracts she had brewed herself.

His father had built huts. The children had played in front of the pagoda while the parents joined in prayer with the monk.

Then came other reminiscences, such as how his parents had been helpless when the Khmer Rouge came and took him away, how he had had to work in camp until he could no longer stay on his feet.

He had spent weeks in the mountain forests of Cambodia on the run from the Vietnamese. Other children of his age drowned in rivers or were hit by bullets.

He only ever tells his tale in bits and pieces and then only as an afterthought, as it were, but he seems to have got over it all reasonably well.

He has done so by playing, for hours, all day and half the night. Often when we told him it was time for bed he has said, with a serious look in his eyes:

"I must play now; for years I was unable to do so."

But now he is more concerned with the present than with the past. On TV he keenly watches reports on Cambodia, but he never talks in terms of going back there.

He does his best, a successful best, to come to terms with his new world. For him the major cities in Germany are the ones with clubs in the soccer *Bundesliga.*

Every weekend he works out their position in the league table. He has a good head for figures and it took him *next to no time to grasp how points* were awarded and what difference goal differentials made.

He knows his way around the shopping centres of Bonn and Bad Godesberg too. He is a fine comparison shopper and a keen saver, especially when his foster-father says a model airplane *and* remote control are maybe too much at once as a birthday present.

He has settled down well at comprehensive school. For some time yet he will need to be given special consideration in grades for German, but in English and maths he can hold his own.

Learning English means more to him than just learning another Western language. Other children start from scratch at English too, so he can see for himself he is their equal.

But there may be even more to his enthusiasm for English. He probably feels it holds the key to the world of teenagers. In the school bus they used the occasional English expression that meant even less to him than scraps of German.

Now he knows he is in there with the rest. Previously he was only on equal terms with the others when playing soccer for the local club.

When it was a matter of formal learning he used to be an outsider, but this is starting to change. There can be no mistaking the good it does him.

The tale of his rescue was told in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 18 months ago. All he did then was look at the photo of himself. This time he will be able to read the story.

He won't have anything to say about it but he will be pleased to see he is described in it as our son.

Hans D. Barbier

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 23 December 1981)